This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

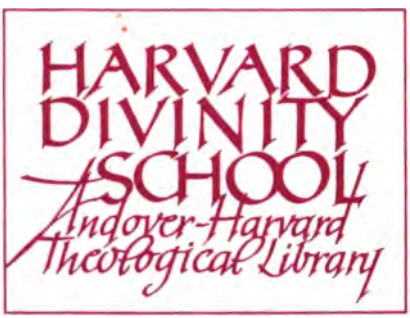
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

ANDOVER-HARVARD LIBRARY
AH 6LEQ 8

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Period
3 3 1
V. 3
1849-50

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

VOLUME III.....1849.

and IV ...
no more ...

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

Duplicate.

A. Forbes, Printer,
No. 37 Cornhill, Boston.

3186
30.3

Digitized by Google

ANDOVER-HARVARD
THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Period. 339
v. 3-4
1849-
1850

INDEX TO VOLUME III.

Abhorrence of Evil, - - - 25
Adams, Dr. N., Convention Sermon, - - - - - - 301
Address to Suffolk North Association, - - - - - 344
Advent of Christ, - - - 49
Ancient and Modern Orthodoxy, - 395
Annals of Salem, - - - 345
Anniversary of A. B. C. F. M., - 492

Baker's Catechism Tested by the Bible, - - - - - 343
Bible, - - - - - - 145
Birth of Unitarianism, - - 44
Buckminsters, Father and Son, - 490
Bunyan's Pilgrim, - - - 92
Bushnell's God in Christ, - - 242

Calhoun, J. C., Letter to, - 40
Catechism Tested by the Bible, - 343
Celebrations at Malden and North Wrentham, - - - - 347
Cheever's Windings of the River of Life, - - - - - - 538
Christianity and the Arts, - 75
Christian World, - - - 94
Church and the World, - - 19
Churches Warned, - - - 471
Congregational Friends, - - 443
Convention Sermon, - - - 301
Correspondence on Missions, - 216
Creeds Returning into Fashion, - 392
Crosby's Letter to Am. Tract Society, - - - - - - 316
Curzon's Visit to Monasteries, - 439

Dr. De Wette, - - - - 187

Earth and Man, - - - - 343
Ecclesiastical Novelty, - - 95
Ecclesiology, - - - - 440
Election Sermon, - - - 143
Ellis, Harrison W., - - - 116
Embarkation of Newell and Judson, - - - - - - 190
Exploration of the Dead Sea, - 438

Felt's Annals of Salem, - - 395
Fisk's Semi-Centennial, - - 347
Forsaking all for Christ, - . - 356
Freedom of Inquiry, - - - 60
Freedom of Inquiry, and Romanism, 154
" " Speaking and Printing, - - - - - - 205
French Politics, - - - - 442
" Revolution of 1848, - 538
Future Punishment, - - - 193

Gallaher's Pilgrimage of Adam and David, - 443
" Western Reminiscences, - - - - - - 412
Gammell's History of Am. Baptist Missions, - - - 342
German Revolution, - - - 16
God known by his Judgments, 377, 459
Gog and and Magog, - - 202
Golden Fleece, - - - - 90
Good and Bad in Roman Catholic Church, - - - - - 346
Guyot's Earth and Man, - - 343

Hale, David, Esq., - - - 144
Harris's Man Primeval, - - 342
Harvard College, - - - 48
" " Charter, - - 331
Hebrew Theocracy, - - 142
Henry, Memoir of Matthew, - 91
Hitchcock on the Four Seasons, 583
Hollis Professorship, - - 144
Hooker's Life of Thomas Hooker, 345
Hope, - - - - - - 336
Huguenots in New England, - 56
Hume's History of England, - 489

Imprecation and Inspiration, - 141
Imputation, - - - - - 483
Independence in the Preacher, - 493
Independent, - - - - 47, 192
Inspiration and the Ministry, - 97
Introduction to Vol. III., - - 1

Jewett's Lectures and Writings, 394
Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, - - - - - 142

Kingship of Christ, - - - 65
Kollock's Pastoral Reminiscences, 539

Lamartine's French Revolution, 538
Last Book of the Bible, - - 541
" Last Stride of Infidelity, - 582
Layard's Nineveh, - - - 439

Digitized by Google

Legislative Chaplains, - - 94
Lesley's Address to the Suffolk North Association, - - - 344
Letter of Hon. Henry Clay, - 192
" on the German Revolution, 16
" to Hon. J. C. Calhoun, - 40
" " Editor of Christian Review, - - - - - 86
Liberator in Bonds, - - - 95
Licences in Boston, - - 192
Lives of Chief Fathers of N. E., - 516
Lothrop's Tract on the Fall, - 566
Loyola, - - - - - - 349
Lynch's Exploration, - - 438
Lyon, Miss Mary, her Death, - 192

Macaulay's History of England, 238
Magoon's Republican Christianity, 341
Margaret Smith's Journal, - 187
Malden Bicentennial Celebration, - 347
Man Primeval, - - - - 342
Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, - - - - - - 140
Merton, Louise, - - - - 93
Millennial Advent of Christ, - 49
Milnor, Memoir of Dr., - - 92
Ministerial Associations, - - 389
Monod's Letter and Sermon, - 445
Monthly Concert, - - - 225
Morell's Philosophy of Religion, 370
Music Teacher's Institute, - - 557

New Church in Lowell St., - 95
" Territory, - - - - 129
Nineveh and its Remains, - 439
Noel's Essay on Church and State, 445
Nourse on the Past and its Legacies, - - - - - - 181
Novel Reading, - - - 167
Novelty in Religion, - - - 70

Ordination at Worcester, - 48
Orthodoxy, Ancient and Modern, - 395

Parker on Resurrection of Christ, 582
Park Street Church, - - 94
Pastoral Reminiscences, - - 539
Paulding's Puritan and his Daughter, - - - - - - 582
Pearl of Days, - - - - 45
Penn, William, - - - 229
Person of Christ, - - - 423
Pierce, Dr. John, - - - 581
Pilgrimage of Adam and David, - 443
Pilgrimage of Ninety Years, - 346
Piscataqua Association, - - 108
Pond's Review of Bushnell, - 394
Pope's Flight, - - - - - 95
Polemical and Practical Religion, 237
Praising of Books, - - - 536
Prayer-Meetings, - - - - 186
Progress, - - - - - 508
Proverbs for the People, - - 45
Puritan's King, - - - - 10

Religion of Sentiment, - - 553
Repentance in the Church, - 561
Revival of Religion, - - - 135
Ripley's Sacred Rhetoric, - 341
Runaway Girls, - - - - 93

Reviews:
Bushnell's God in Christ, - 242
Foster's Letter, etc., - 316
Lives of Chief Fathers, - 516
Lothrop on the Fall, - 566
Morell's Philosophy of Religion, - - - - - 370
Nourse's Past and its Legacies, - - - - - 181
Noel's Union of Church and State, - - - - - 445
Turnbull's Theophany, - 175

Sacramental Meditation, - - 163
Sanctification by the Cross, - 515
Scenes in Luther's Life, - 46
Schleiermacher, - - - 535
Scientific Meeting at Cambridge, 479
Second Church in Boston, - - 491
Shakspeare, - - - - - 488
Sound Mind, - - - - - 405
Southey's Common-Place Book, 537

Temperance Convention, - - 144
Thoughts on Reading, - - 212
True Foundation, - - - 466
Try the Spirits, - - - - 504
Turnbull's Theophany, - - 175
Tyler's Tacitus, - - - - 189

Unitarianism, Birth of, - - 44
Unitarian Revival Meetings, - 96
University Sermons, - - 46

Valediction, - - - - 584
Visit to Monasteries in the Levant, 439

Way of Salvation, - - - 397
Wegscheider's Death, - - 239
Western Reminiscences, - - 412
Williams, Roger, - - - 100
" " and his Betters, 139
Windings of River of Life, - - 538
Witness of the Spirit, - - 29
Wood's Works, Vol. I., - - 488

Digitized by Google

553
561
135
445
535
479
491
488
405
537
144
212
466
504
175
189
44
96
46
584
439
397
239
412
139
538
29
488
181
370

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
Introduction,	1
The Puritans' King,	10
Letter on the German Revolution,	16
The Church and the World,	19
Abhorrence of Evil,	25
The Witness of the Spirit,	29
Letter to Hon. John C. Calhoun,	40
Observations on Men, Books and Things:	
Birth of Unitarianism,	44
Pearl of Days,	45
Proverbs for the People,	45
Dr. Wayland's University Sermons,	46
Scenes in Luther's Life,	46
Monthly Record,	47

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office nine dollars, shall receive six copies of the Christian Observatory for one year.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863, Oct. 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. JANUARY, 1849. No. 1.

INTRODUCTION.

THE former Editor of the OBSERVATORY having felt himself called, in the providence of God, to return to the discharge of pastoral duties, a number of pastors have been requested to undertake with him the editorship of the work, and have consented to assume that responsibility. A few words may be expected from us, as to our principles and aims. This work has never been designed as a rival to the larger quarterlies, which are conducted with so much learning and ability. It is designed rather to be eminently practical, and to act directly on the doctrinal and spiritual interests of the churches, and their ministry, by short articles which all, who will, can find time to read. It is designed to be an organ, through which our denomination can utter its voice, and make known its views on the great questions of the age.

As a body we occupy a vantage ground from which we cannot be driven, and of which it is our duty to avail ourselves to the utmost.

Among the influences that mould and control the destinies of nations, none are more powerful than those emanating from the principles, and examples of an illustrious ancestry. And no nation can boast of an ancestry more illustrious than the Puritan Fathers of New England. But of these Fathers, we are the legitimate successors and representatives.

Others have departed from their doctrinal views, but we hold them fast. Other modes of Church government have, since their day, been introduced among their descendants; but we still retain

Digitized by Google

the mode established by them, — a mode which they preferred to all others, and valued above all price, as deduced directly from the Word of God, through long continued and prayerful study. Whatever influence, then, the natural reverence for antiquity may confer, is legitimately ours. In the old world, the Romish Church derives very great power from this source. True, the antiquities of the Scriptural Fathers, that is, of inspired prophets and apostles, are not hers. But to many principles of the Nicene Fathers she can appeal as sustaining her system, and the Fathers of the Middle Ages are hers. In like manner, the architecture and the literature of these ages are hers. All the old cathedrals and universities of England lead the mind back to Rome. Such an influence is fearfully powerful for evil. No one can tell how great a curse to the world those portions of the works of the early fathers have been, from which are still derived the seeds of Puseyism and of Popery, for all nations. Equally great is the blessing to us, that from such pollutions our Fathers had been thoroughly purged, before they became the fountain heads of influence for the present and future millions of this land. Their doctrines, their ecclesiastical polity, and their lives, were pure. They were trees of life, on the banks of the river of the water of life flowing from the sanctuary of God; and the fruit of these trees is still for food, and their leaves are for the healing of the nations.

A work was assigned to them by God, great beyond conception. It was, in few words, to extricate vital religion from the formalism of the old world, to dissolve the unholy and corrupting alliance of the church with the state, and through religious, to establish civil liberty. Our conceptions of the vast importance of their relations to the destinies of the human race, are becoming every year more elevated, as the principles introduced by them are pervading and shaking the world. Such were our Fathers, such their work, and such is the vantage ground on which we stand. We do not say these things to excite pride or boasting, but to affect our minds with a deep sense of responsibility. We are called in our generation to sustain and extend these great principles, and to transmit them unimpaired to future ages. We are called on to do our part of the work that is involved in executing those vast designs of God, which he commenced through them. And who is sufficient for these things? Who has the

Digitized by Google

holiness, the intellectual enlargement, the moral power, the courage, and the burning zeal, that are demanded for this great work? There is no room for pride. We need rather to be emptied of self, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God.

What, then, is the condition in which we find ourselves when called on to take up and carry forward this great work, and what are the circumstances by which we are surrounded?

We are but a few years removed from certain great religious conflicts, which were undertaken and sustained in defence of the doctrinal principles of our fathers.

These conflicts began about thirty years ago, and conspicuous in them we find such names as Morse, Worcester, Evarts, Codman, Stuart, Woods, Beecher, Wisner, Pond, and Cheever. Their ends were, first, to compel the false system which had privily stolen in to reveal itself; and then, when it was revealed, to confute it, and to expose its unprincipled spoliations, and legalized oppressions of those churches which still revered the faith of their fathers.

As each successive conflict came on, it was, at least in this land, invested with entire novelty; and this fact, together with the vast importance of the questions involved, excited a peculiar and absorbing interest.

But these conflicts were not the result of mere human intellect and emotions. They sprung from, and were attended by, glorious and joyful effusions of the Spirit of God. These were the life of those arduous conflicts, and imparted to them a sanctity, a depth, and a power, which could have proceeded from no other source.

But those scenes have passed by, and, in certain respects, none like them will return. Controversy then put forth its full strength on the leading points at issue, when all was fresh and new; it came to its results, and its novelty is over. What has been well done, needs not to be done again, and the mind of the community cannot be aroused to the same effort. Other revivals, of equal or greater power, may come; but the original interest of past controversies can never be revived. We do not, however, mean to assert that all discussion on the points then at issue is at an end. The signs of the times do not favor such an opinion. It is not at all unlikely that a new vindication of the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement, with their related truths, may be soon demanded. All that we mean is, that the first and all-absorbing

Digitized by Google

interest of such discussions is over; and that if our feelings are to be as much aroused as once they were, the excitement must be derived from other sources. In certain respects this is an advantage. If any points of the past controversy should come up anew, we can then with greater discrimination avail ourselves of the results of previous discussions, aided by the mature thought and study of intervening years.

The system of error was defeated, we have said. It was, so far as argument was concerned. But defeated as it was in argument, it yet survives, though with greatly diminished power.

But evil influences, of great present and future power, have flowed from that system, which its first promulgators did not anticipate, but which nevertheless must in justice be laid to its charge. The effects of that system are not at an end. It contained from the first, principles which, if logically developed, would result in infidelity. This was openly declared by some far-seeing minds. What it has ever tended to in principle, it has now become in form, as held by many; and the greatest momentum, fervor, and mental power are manifested, in the matured and open infidel developments of the system. The authors of these proclaim them as the logical issue of those principles and that progress, for which all have been pleading, and rebuke the timidity of those who dare not maintain a logical consistency with themselves.

And indeed, after all the outcry made in regard to the latest form of infidelity, the earlier leaders of the party were not, in principle, one whit more sound in their views of the inspiration of the Word of God, than the later. They sacrificed the Old Testament to save the New, and practically left nothing in the New but the gospels, and then denied the plenary inspiration of these. In their malignant pantheism, the leaders of the new infidelity have in reality outstripped those of the old; but in other respects the advanced infidel party are in fact, what they claim to be, consistent expositors of the logical results of the system against which we have for years contended.

The dangers which, in these circumstances, call upon us to be on our guard, will readily suggest themselves to a thoughtful mind. There is often a collapse, when a community has passed out of a period of conflict and of high excitement which cannot be revived. To those who remember this excitement, the regular course of spiritual progress may seem tame; and the mind may

Digitized by Google

revert with regret to the enthusiasm of those days of stern contention for the truth, and disrelishing any thing less exciting, may fall into a state of dangerous lethargy. Against such tendencies there is a sure defence, to which all should earnestly resort; we mean a degree of the interior and spiritual life so high, that it shall invest with surpassing interest that regenerating and sanctifying work of the Spirit of God, which is common to all ages, and upon which, at all times, the progress of the church entirely depends.

There is also a hidden danger, of which we should be fully aware, in the powerful influence for evil of the works wherein systems of error which have been defeated in controversy are still set forth, and sustained with all the charms of refined style, and plausible sophistry. Some of these works indeed, especially the more elevated attacks on the Word of God, are above the range of the popular mind. But they are not for that reason devoid of influence on that mind. They are elevated reservoirs of the bitter and poisoned waters of error; and even if few besides educated minds ascend so high as to reach them, yet these minds become conductors of those waters to the lower grades of society; and thus all classes are poisoned and die together. But because the storm of controversy is over, and such works do not proclaim their results openly in the pulpit, or through the periodicals of the day, but circulate silently in the form of books, they excite little apprehension. Yet in this form they are mingling with the circulation of the life's blood of the community, and sending their poison to its very heart.

The existence too of such masses of error and infidelity, like the mountains of ice that float from the polar sea, chills the moral atmosphere on all sides, and diminishes the fervor of faith even in the hearts of those who truly believe. Moreover, as the gospel has been attacked on rational grounds, the habit of defending it on such grounds, which is naturally formed, is not without its dangers. The Gospel is shorn of its power, if the tone of its advocates becomes merely apologetic or defensive. It is a message of God to lost man. It depends for its efficacy on his authority, and the influences of his Spirit. To proclaim it aright, there is needed a holy boldness and an inward power and fervor, which no rationalizing process can produce, and which can be derived only from copious effusions of the supernatural influences of the Spirit of God.

Digitized by Google

The work, then, to which God summons us as a denomination, is plain. First of all, that both ministers and churches, with the utmost vigilance, guard against that spiritual lethargy into which they are in danger of falling; and that we do all in our power to arouse one another to earnest efforts for the highest degrees of spiritual life. There is also needed a skilful and earnest defence of the Word of God as the basis of all our hopes. To this end it is important that suitable persons be induced and encouraged to prepare treatises adapted to meet the most recent phases of infidelity. Here a very great work yet remains to be done. There are no works now in existence prepared in view of the most recent developments of infidelity, and adapted in all respects to meet the wants of the age.

The last results of the infidelity of Europe, are flowing in upon us. Our own latest form of infidelity, is of European origin. But it has been transfused and naturalized among us, and its seeds have been sown broad-cast in the minds of our young men. There has not been time to witness its mature developments. Yet many, even now, are alarmed at the increasing immorality of the metropolis, and at the tendency of many young men to return to those old habits of intemperance, which we fondly hoped had ceased forever. All such would do well to inquire, what hope there is of maintaining the high-toned morals of Puritanism, after that Book on which the Puritans based their whole system, has lost its hold on large masses of the community, and especially upon our young men? The Bible is the basis of New England society, more emphatically than of that of any other country on the globe. How deeply then does it affect us, that in New England, the most violent, concentrated, and systematic attacks have been made on the Word of God, that the history of this nation records. Hence, the great, the vital problem for New England is, how most effectually to vindicate the Word of God, and thus preserve and increase its power.

To aid in effecting so indispensable an end, will continue to be, as it ever has been, one great object of this work. In addition to a defence of the Bible, we shall endeavor to carry the war into the enemy's camp, and to show what utter ruin our whole system, social, civil, and religious must expect, if their principles prevail.

In exhibiting and defending the doctrines of the Word of God, we shall stand upon the broad common ground of New England

Digitized by Google

theology; and seek to unite in fraternal confidence and coöperation all who sincerely hold the great fundamental truths of the Gospel, upon which the whole system of our fathers was based.

We shall also deem it our duty to pay increasing attention to the principles of Church order, which we have received from our fathers. They are at this time exciting unwonted interest in various parts of our land; and in our opinion they are destined to exert an increasing influence on the destinies of the world. The great battle of the Son of God is not merely with civil despotisms; ecclesiastical despotisms are also to be destroyed. No system can carry out so consistently and thoroughly as ours, an argument that shall destroy the essential principles from which the strength of existing corrupt hierarchies is derived. It is of great moment then, that the principles of our system be truly apprehended, clearly set forth, and vigorously defended.

The principles of Christian reform will also claim our attention. The progress of Christianity has been such, that its principles have enabled men to see as they never saw before, all the existing evils of society. Hence the world is full of theories and plans of social reform. To such an extent is this the spirit of the age, that even infidelity now marches under the banner of reform. Availing itself of the progress of the human mind, of which the Bible is the cause, and of those principles of truth which, originally radiating from it, have become like the diffused light of the sun, they are now seeking to outrun the inspired Word of God in the race of reform, and to reject it as altogether behind the spirit of the age.

The great doctrines of depravity, atonement, and regeneration, are not the basis of their reforms. This is especially true of the leaders of the Fourierite movement. They believe that the evils of society can be cured by a mere change of external organizations. Yet, though their theories are false, the subjects discussed by them, are of vast moment, and it is not enough merely to reject infidel solutions of great practical questions in government, and political economy; we are bound to investigate such subjects on Christian principles, and to give a Christian solution of the problems proposed. The example of the great Dr. Chalmers may well be held up for our imitation in this respect. The distribution of property had been long discussed without any reference to its relations to the principles of Chris-

Digitized by Google

tianity. He had the sagacity to see its intimate connection with the future destinies of our race, and as a Christian philosopher, he devoted his highest energies to its discussion. We would endeavor to go and do likewise.

Not less momentous is the great subject of Christian education. No system of education can be true to facts, and true to God, which is not based upon the great doctrines of human depravity, and of salvation through the atonement of Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit. The main design of our Fathers in their system of education, was to prepare the way for the regeneration and eternal salvation of their children. But at this time, many, under the pretext of rejecting sectarianism, would reject every element of the system of our Fathers, and leave nothing but natural religion behind. To ascertain in what manner a result so deplorable may be prevented, and the great ends of our Fathers be realized, will demand mature thought, and thorough and judicious discussion.

The present condition of Natural Theology, and the relations of science to religion, will also demand our attention. God is as really the author of Natural, as of Revealed Theology, — of science, as of the Bible. What he reveals in one way, he never contradicts in another. Yet an improper mode of treatment has often arrayed science against the Word of God. Infidelity has in all ages sought to erect for itself fortresses in this quarter. We shall therefore, with the greater vigilance, note the appearance of any dangers from this source, and strive to show the real harmony of all natural, with revealed truth.

Biographical notices have been a striking feature of this work, and have contributed much to its interest and usefulness. We shall continue to pay attention to this department, until our Fathers, like a great cloud of witnesses surround us, and by their holy example inspire our courage and invigorate our faith. And our pages will ever be open to record the great lessons of God, taken from the book of history. This is destined to become more and more a historical age. The great judgment of past ages and systems, which is at hand, is to be effected through a true science of history; and till history is studied from God's point of vision, a true judgment of the past can never be formed. Infidelity and Pantheism have written histories on their principles. Christianity is yet to write them on hers.

Digitized by Google

Nor shall we exclude from our pages questions of philosophy or criticism, so far as they can be made subservient to the great interests of morality and religion.

It may be needless to add, that judicious discussions of the principles and modes of benevolent enterprise, will be readily admitted to our pages, and that we shall sustain with all our power those great enterprises for evangelizing the world, which are in a peculiar sense, the glory of this age.

We have already adverted to the subject of revivals of religion. But, regarding them, as we do, as the main-spring of our whole system, the foundation of all our hopes, we again recur to them to say that we shall devote our highest efforts to vindicate them from all assaults, and to excite the ministry and the churches to pour forth such earnest prayers, and use such wisely adapted means, as shall restore to us with increased frequency and power those seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

By thus specifying the subjects to be considered in this work, we do not mean to exclude all that are not mentioned; and accordingly, though we do not promise a monthly view of public affairs, or of political changes and revolutions, yet we shall not hesitate at any time to speak on all such topics, whatever the great interests of the cause of God may seem to demand.

It will be seen that the field before us is wide. But the conductors of this work do not rely upon their own labors merely, in filling out the plan which they have sketched. They look with great confidence to their brethren, lay as well as clerical, for aid in this good work.

If any have been inditing good matters concerning our glorious king, or his cause, we invite them to wield the pen of the ready writer, and to entrust us with the duty of giving utterance to their words.

The age in which we live, and the position which we occupy as a denomination, demand sublime thoughts and glowing emotions. Such thoughts and emotions dwell in the mind of the High and Holy One. And though we are men of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, yet, if he will but cleanse our hearts, and touch our lips as with a coal from his altar, we shall receive the honor of going forth as his messengers, to disclose his thoughts, and to proclaim his will.

Digitized by Google

THE PURITANS' KING.

It was their fidelity to Christ as a King, the Lawgiver, the Ruler, and the Defender of his covenant people, which made the Puritans the men they were. This is the secret of their peculiar character. This is the very essence of Puritanism. The matter has been but little understood. Many have asked what the Puritans did; but few have inquired what they were, and what it was which made them do so nobly and truly. Fidelity to Christ, as their King in all spiritual concerns, was the master-passion of their lives. They were absorbed in this sublime allegiance which would endure no rival near his throne; and would sooner die, than yield submission to the slightest usurpation of his royal power, or the least infringement of his royal rights. This fixed principle was the tap-root of Puritanism; and from thence came all its growth and fruitfulness.

In the times of Popish darkness, each of the offices of Christ in his Church, had been invaded and set aside. His prophetical office, as the only authoritative teacher in his Church, had been overthrown, by substituting human teachings and traditions in the room of his holy Word and its pure doctrines. His priestly office, as the only Redeemer of men, and the one Mediator between men and God, was no less infringed upon, by putting human merit instead of the cross; and sacraments and ceremonies instead of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit; and saints, angels, and the Holy Virgin, as mediators equally with Christ. The infractions of his kingly office were no less gross and impious. Men, pretending to act in his name, dared to annul his laws for the government and discipline of his church, and supplant them by decrees and ordinances of their own. A usurping hierarchy, engrossing a power which belongs exclusively to Christ, overturned all his enactments, and imposed terms of citizenship and office in his kingdom, totally opposed to its divine constitution and order.

The protestant reformation was undertaken to correct these abuses. And so far as related to the prophetical work and the priestly work of our Lord, the reform was very thoroughly effected. The true doctrine of Christ's gospel was once more openly professed and plainly preached; and free salvation through Christ's atonement and intercession was once more proclaimed aloud. But

Digitized by Google

the kingship of Christ was not restored. The monarchs of Europe only wrested the stolen sceptre out of the hands of the pope, that they might hold it in their own unhallowed grasp. They claimed to be supreme heads of the church within their own dominions, and became popes as well as princes.

This was especially the case in England. There the tyrannical Henry and imperious Elizabeth, compelled parliament and people to acknowledge the sovereign for the time being as supreme head of the Church of England, whom all the people must obey in matters of faith and worship, under pain of imprisonment, and death, temporal and eternal.

It was against this outrageous intrusion of an earthly ruler, who might, perchance, be a monster of profligacy and atheism, or perhaps a mere child, a girl, into the throne of Zion's King, that the souls of the old Puritans revolted in holy indignation. They burned with a godly jealousy for the rights and honors of their Lord, and demanded that his royal right and prerogative should be restored. They insisted that Jesus should rule and regulate the Church, the kingdom he had purchased with his own blood, by his own sacred volume, the only statute-book of his realm. They required the sweeping away of the whole rubbish of decrees of popes, councils and kings, traditionary canons and unlawful offices, under whose heap the Bible lay buried and forgotten. Listen to the words of Thomas Cartwright, one of the most learned fathers of Puritanism, and a severe sufferer for his zeal for the Saviour's crown and kingdom. That good man said: "No preacher may, without great danger of the laws, utter all truth comprised in the Book of God. It is so circumscribed, and wrapt within the compass of such statutes, such penalties, such injunctions, such advertisements, such articles, such canons, such caveats, and such manifold pamphlets, that in a manner it doth but peep out from behind the screen. The laws of the land, the Book of Common Prayer, the Queen's injunctions, the Commissioner's advertisements, the bishop's late canons, Lindwood's Provincials, every bishop's articles in his diocese, my Lord of Canterbury's Sober Caveats, in his licenses to preachers, and his High Court prerogatives, or grave fatherly faculties, these together, or the worst of them (as some of them be too bad!) may not be broken or offended against, but with more danger than to offend against the Bible. To these, subscribing, and subscribing again,

Digitized by Google

and the third subscribing, are required: for these, preachers, and others, are indicted, are fined, are imprisoned, are excommunicated, are banished, and have worse things threatened them: and the Bible,—*that* must have no further scope, than by these it is assigned! Is this to profess God's Word? Is this a Reformation? We say that the Word is above the Church: (Eph. ii. 20,) then surely it is above the English Church, and above all these books before rehearsed! If it be so, why are they not overruled by it, and not it by them?"

By this eloquent protestation we may clearly see on what ground the Puritans entrenched their camp. But as the position is so important, it shall be fortified by other distinct testimonies. Robert Hawkins, a London minister, was under trial, in 1567, before the bishop and other judges, for presuming to hold separate worship from the established Church. He thus defined his position, in his reply to the prelate: "You preach Christ to be a prophet and a priest, but not to be a King; nor will you suffer him to reign in his Church *alone*, by the sceptre of his Word; but *the pope's canon-law*, and *the will of the prince*, must be preferred before the Word and ordinance of God." "We had rather be torn in a hundred pieces than communicate with you. We neither hold nor allow any thing that is not contained in the Word of God." William White, a fellow-sufferer with Hawkins, and a layman of London, having been two years in a dungeon, wrote a letter to the bishop, which he subscribed in these words: "Yours in the Lord to command, WILLIAM WHITE, who joineth with you in every speck of truth; but utterly detesteth whole antichrist, head, body, and tail, never to join with you, or any, in the least joint thereof; nor in any ordinance of man, contrary to the Word of God."

The Puritans, though much oppressed, had some strong backers. Thus Dr. Jewell, the truly pious bishop of Salisbury, said of the title "Head of the Church," that it "could not be justly given to any mortal, it being due only to Christ; and that such titles had been so much abused by antichrist, that they ought not to be any longer continued." And bishop Stillingfleet, in the preface to that old book, his "Irenicum," says: "The grand commission the apostles were sent out with, was only to teach *what Christ had commanded them;* not the least intimation of any power given them to impose or require anything beyond what he himself

Digitized by Google

had spoken to them, or they were directed to by the immediate guidance of the Spirit of God." In a letter written to a prelate by that tolerant papist, Maximilian II., emperor of Germany, in 1564, that potentate declares, that "there is no sin, no tyranny, more grievous than to affect dominion over men's consciences; and they who do so, go about to invade the tower of heaven." And the emperor Napoleon said, when at the height of his power: "*My* dominion ends where that of conscience begins."

The Puritan view is well exhibited in a treatise published in 1647, by John Cook, a celebrated lawyer, and afterwards executed as a traitor for having acted as the prosecuting officer at the trial of Charles I., that notorious usurper of our Saviour's kingly power. "The question, truly stated," says Cook, "is but this: Whether the inventions of men ought any more to be mixed with the institutions of Christ in his Kingly office, than their good works in his Priestly office?" An Independent, he adds, "is content to be every man's servant, so as Christ may but reign over his conscience, which if he should not, we know not where he is to reign." "He depends not on any but Christ Jesus, the Head, in point of canon and command, for spiritual matters. Concerning the discipline of Christ's Church, he does no more depend upon man, than concerning the doctrine; and counts it the most glorious sight in the world, to see Jesus Christ walk as King, ruling by the sceptre of his Word, in the midst of his golden candlesticks." One more of the old Regicide's rousing words: "Christ's Kingdom is only there where *His* laws are in force; for that country is no part of a prince's dominion, which is not regulated by his laws."

The Puritan settlers of New England undertook their perilous and painful migration to these shores, for the express purpose of carrying out into thorough practice their grand principle, "that there is, under the New Testament, a sacred visible church-state, order, or polity, instituted and appointed by Jesus Christ, and him only; to the observation of which, believers are everywhere bound willingly to submit and subject themselves." The Massachusetts colonists all subscribed to the "Declaration of the Faith and Order owned and practised in the Congregational Churches in England," which is commonly called the "Savoy Confession," and was adopted in 1658. It is therein set forth, that "by the appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, instituting, order, or government of the Church, is invested, in a supreme

Digitized by Google

and sovereign manner, in the Lord Jesus Christ, as King and Head thereof." And the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in a similar declaration, adopted in 1833, announce, that "they acknowledge Christ as the only Head of the Church," and "their only appeal in all questions touching their religious faith and practice, is to the Sacred Scriptures."

The sentiments of our pilgrim fathers are well expressed by the celebrated Dr. John Owen: "They who hold communication with the Lord Jesus Christ, will admit nothing, practise nothing, in the worship of God, but what they have his warrant for. Unless coming in his name, they will not hear an angel from heaven. They know the apostles themselves were to teach the saints only what he commanded them. And you know how many in this very nation, in the days not long since passed, yea, how many thousands left their native soil, and went into a vast and howling wilderness in the uttermost parts of the world, to keep their souls undefiled and chaste unto their dear Lord Jesus, as to this matter of his worship and institutions."

Thomas Hooker, the founder of Hartford, in the preface to his once celebrated "Survey of Church Discipline," thus plainly states the case as to the object mainly sought by him and his brethren: "As the *prophetical* and *priestly* office of Christ was completely vindicated in the first times of reformation, so now the great cause and work of God's reforming people is, to clear the rights of Christ's *kingly* office, and in their practice to set up his kingdom." The name of Puritans was fixed upon them on account of their so strenuously insisting on the restoration of the Christian faith and institutions in their *purity*, according to the rules laid down by the adorable Founder of Christianity. Cost what it would, home, country, treasure, friends and life, they were bent on maintaining inviolate and entire, the supreme and undivided headship and sovereignty of Christ over all things pertaining to the church. They rejected all canons and customs which could not plead the recorded inspiration of the Bible in their favor. When they had thoroughly purged the Church of all legislation but Christ's, they found nothing left but simple Congregationalism; the only system of church policy which perfectly accords with the genius of Christianity, and is instinct with the free spirit of our religion. Jonathan Mitchell, the admired pastor of Cambridge, at whose death it was said, that "all New England shook

Digitized by Google

when that pillar fell," thus states the case: "It is our errand into the wilderness to study and practise true Scripture reformation: and it will be our crown in the sight of God and man, if we find it, and hold it, without adulterating deviations."

The view which our fathers took of a pure and proper church is this; — It is an absolute monarchy democratically administered. It is an absolute monarchy; for Christ is its Head and King; his will is the highest law; he alone has the right to legislate; and his decrees registered in the Bible must alone be obeyed. And the affairs of this spiritual monarchy are democratically administered; for to the Church is given the free election of all its executive officers, and the members are all possessed of equal rights and privileges. What noble schools of liberty must be found in these self-governing societies, so willingly obedient to Christ, and so free from vassalage to man! The Church can do nothing but what Christ has authorised her to do. The power committed to the Church, is a power for administering the laws, not for making them. Christ put a stop to all further making of laws for his kingdom, when he closed the list of inspired writings. The famous John Cotton, the father of New England Congregationalism, in his comment on that clause in the apostle's commission, — "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," — well remarks: "If even the apostles teach people to observe more than Christ has commanded, *they go beyond their commission;* and a larger commission than that given to the apostles, neither Elders, nor Synods, nor Churches, can challenge."

John Higginson, the worthy minister of Salem, affirms: "This was, and is, our cause, that Christ alone might be acknowledged by us, as the only head, Lord, and Lawgiver, in his Church; that his written word might be acknowledged as the only rule; that only his, and all his, institutions might be observed and enjoyed by us; and that with purity and liberty, with peace and power." "In matters divine, where we have a clear command, with Moses, we yield not an hoof to Pharaoh."

One of the oldest Puritans, who died on the scaffold, a faithful martyr to Jesus, once said to his brethren in the faith and patience of Christ: "Let us, for the appeasing and assurance of our consciences, give heed to the Word of God, and by that golden reed measure our temple, our altar, and our worshippers; even

Digitized by Google

by these rules, whereby the apostles, those excellent perfect workmen, founded and built the first churches." And one of the latest and ablest writers on this subject says: "The Word of God is our only rule, in the sense both of a law, and a standard; a rule sufficient, as opposed to all deficiency; exclusive, as relates to any other than the Divine authority from which it emanates; universal, as embracing all the principles of human actions; and ultimate, as admitting of no appeal from its decisions."

Nearly a century after the landing of the pilgrims, an assembly of Connecticut ministers, in setting forth their general assent to the Savoy Confession of Faith, made a preface to their solemn act and testimony, in the following admirable words: "We do not assume to ourselves that anything is to be taken on trust from us, but commend to our people the following counsels: 1. That you be immovably and unchangeably agreed in *the only sufficient and invariable rule of religion*, which is the HOLY SCRIPTURE, the fixed canon, incapable of addition or diminution. YOU OUGHT TO ACCOUNT NOTHING ANCIENT THAT WILL NOT STAND BY THIS RULE; AND NOTHING NEW THAT WILL. 2. That you be determined by this rule in the whole of religion. That your faith be right and divine, the Word of God must be the *foundation* of it, and the authority of the Word the *reason* of it." Thus have the Puritans and their legitimate offspring always adhered to the noble maxim of Peter Martyr, admitting "nothing *without*, nothing *against*, nothing *beside*, nothing *beyond* the divine Scriptures."

DR. MÜLLER'S LETTER ON THE GERMAN REVOLUTION.*

DEAR AND RESPECTED FRIEND.

You wish from me a letter written expressly for your "Church-Friend," wherein I may impart my sentiments as to the recent revolutions in Germany, and particularly as to their actual and probable influence on the Church. I would readily respond to your wishes, could I do so without becoming an accuser of my

* Addressed to the Editor of "Der Deutsche Kirchenfreund," and translated from that work for December, 1848.

Digitized by Google

people before your present countrymen, which I have not the heart to do. You well know that I am not one of the *pessimists;* but I can look for nothing salutary from this whole commotion, so long as its existing tendencies are so deficient in religious and moral earnestness. The Frankfort Assembly was opened amid frivolous declarations, greeted with clamorous cheering, that the Germans had served God sufficiently, and must henceforth apply themselves to practical matters; and in the parliaments of Vienna and Berlin, this feeling was still more rampant. And this is that people whose standing epithet used to be, — "the religious!"

Our State, as you know from the journals, has formally thrown off its Christian character. Against this I have nothing to say, so long as this act only expresses the matter-of-fact which made the official Christianity of our State a mere untruth, — namely, that the great mass of our population is no longer pervaded by the spirit of Christianity. Moreover, all our political impulses produce in me an overpowering impression of rottenness and dissolution. The republic, or rather the anarchy, among us, is destitute of true energy and decision, or it would have gone much further. The revolution has not as yet thrown up men of character, able to inspire awe. And while anarchy has spread far enough in certain directions, yet our politics seem for the most part to move in a path leading to a precipice, — that is to say, toward that kind of constitutional monarchy, which is, in fact, a democratic republic, only that it places a king at the head, who will have nothing to do at Frankfort except to nominate a prime minister, and to be looking out for a speedy successor to the person he has just nominated. I own, that nothing so disgusts me, as *this* sort of constitutional monarchy. I can commend the republic which honorably says what it is; and does not, like such a monarchy, lead the government into intrigue and corruption, in order to secure by secret arts an influence it could not openly claim.

As for the evangelical Church, one would suppose that this tumult would give it a strong impulse to rally in strength against the assaults of that radicalism, which thinks to use the above-mentioned separation of the State from all nearer relation to the Church, as a weapon for cutting off from the latter all material resources, and all influence upon popular education. And it ought to collect its strength, not merely against radicalism, but also against the Romish Church, which will naturally derive very great

Digitized by Google

advantage from the proclaimed division between State and Church. But instead of this, our rigid Lutherans have been most industriously horrifying themselves at all communion with the professors of more free evangelical principles, and are for coming out from the "Babel" of the local churches. They wage severer contests against those who seek safety and peace in the same Saviour, than against infidelity and political radicalism. This, to me, is the sorest mistake of our evangelical Germany, of which I might say with Melanchthon: "Could I but shed as many tears as our Elbe pours of waves when in full stream, my grief would not be drawn dry." It is to be expected, that, as one sad consequence of dissolving the union between the protestant Church and the State, there will be forthwith a general splitting up into sects.

In order to plant all the barriers possible against this threatening and dangerous tendency, there is to be a great assemblage at Wittemberg, on the twenty-first of this month, to consider the question, Whether, and how, a German evangelical church-league may be effected. It is my intention to be present. The invitation is addressed to "all who stand on the ground of the evangelical confession." The representatives of strict Lutheranism have already, for the most part, refused to take part in it. The "Light-friends," of course, will not be there; or, if they are, will miss their reckoning, and find themselves shut out. It may become the beginning of an organization for a German, evangelical, national Church, if it can succeed in holding together, for the formation of such a church-league, those portions of the German evangelical Church which lie between those extremes. May God grant his blessing! *

Yours faithfully,

J. MÜLLER.

Halle, Sept. 18, 1848.

* By more recent intelligence, we learn that the "Evangelical-United Conference" at Wittemberg, alluded to in the above paragraph, has been held over Luther's grave with very gratifying results. There were present above five hundred clergymen from all parts of Germany, and among them the most celebrated theologians and preachers, such as the learned Dr. Müller, the writer of the above letter, Nitzsch, Hengstenberg, Dorner, Lehnerdt, Krummacher, etc. There were also many distinguished laymen, such as the two presidents of the "Conference," Von Bethman-Hollweg, and Professor Stahl, the famous jurist; also Presidents Von Gerlach, and Von Gotze. Men, agreeing in the essentials of religion, but who had been widely separated in

Digitized by Google

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.

We propose in this article to speak of the Christian distinction between the Church and the World, and our address is to the men of the world. The distinction has an invidious aspect, just as every other important distinction has; as those of rich and poor, learned and ignorant. Yet these distinctions are none the less real, for being offensive. Nor is there just cause of offence. The purposes of science require the classification of its subjects; and each science necessarily adopts the distinctions which arise from its own peculiar principles. It must, therefore, be conceded to Christianity to employ a classification of mankind, which shall be the logical result of its own fundamental principles. The basis of one scientific division of the human race is, the diversity of physical structure; of another, the various forms of civil government; of another, the various religious systems that obtain. But Christianity assumes for the ground of its classification, these facts, — that human character is radically and invariably defective in its first development; that this defect involves, as a consequence, a fatal relation to the government of Jehovah, and to the eternal issues of that government; and, that a supernatural influence is needed in every case, to secure a favorable change in the character and relations of men. In the one class, it recognizes those who are the subjects of this radical change; in the other, those whose development is natural, and not supernatural. It has been God's purpose in all ages, and for ends most benevolent, to make prominent this distinction.

Yet we are not surprised that this division has ever excited an undisguised hostility, from the early days of Cain, to the most recent modern scoffer, who has sneered at "the saints." Nor are we surprised that every form of attack has been made upon this distinction; and that the world has labored to efface this line of demarcation from human belief. The divine authority of the book so replete with it, has been assailed. The text must be destroyed, or the legitimate interpretation of it distorted. Baptismal regeneration, sacramental sanctification, priestly absolution, and state-religion, have here a common origin with infidelity.

feeling, in these hard times gladly gave the fraternal hand of fellowship, for the purpose of forming a church-league to comprehend, in a new "body of evangelicals," all Germans who adhere to the evangelical confessions.

Digitized by Google

We do not indeed admit that the gospel is responsible for all that many have claimed for it. But we stand by all that it claims for itself. We admit that it annihilates the distinctions which flatter the self-esteem of those who deny their own need of regeneration; that it confounds them with men whose characters they despise; that it exalts mean men to a position where they can despise all the honors of the world. But we deny that the ground of this distinction is fanciful; that it has a tendency to depress the standard of moral excellence; that it represents the eternal destinies of men to be suspended on conditions unworthy of the justice and goodness of God. And we must ask the World to leave the Church in undisturbed possession of these technical terms. We must maintain, in spite of all the objections we have heard, that no man can demonstrate the impossibility, or the injustice, of making eternal destiny turn upon points which pass for trifles in the estimation of men. It may be that God and men regard things very differently, that "that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." It may be that there are often planted in the roughest soil, seeds of character, "like a grain of mustard seed," unattractive by their size and color; but containing the germs of the trees of of Paradise. We admit, that under the pretence of a sudden, mental transformation, aided by a skilful imitation of the appropriate outward signs, there may be gross hypocrisy, or self-delusion. But we cannot consent to abandon gold coin, in order to avoid the evils of counterfeiting. We do not, moreover, confound virtuous men with the vicious. Vice is a crime against civil law, or an offence against the proprieties of life. An unregenerate man may be very far from that. He may be as intelligent, as moral, and as lovely, as the young man whom the Saviour loved. But, like him, he may turn away from the "terms of salvation," and remain "in and of the world," in our technical sense. Christianity gives no place to what is now called radicalism, because it insists that one mark of regeneration is, to "give honor to whom honor is due," to regard "whatsoever things are honest, lovely, and of good report," "to give no offence in any thing." It does not depress the standard of character, nor abate the requirements of the moral law. But it does offer pardon, and open a door of hope, to every one that would rise from his spiritual degradation; while "the proud it sends empty away."

Digitized by Google

We further concede that this subject has often been treated in a manner unnecessarily offensive. And to contribute our share toward establishing a right understanding between the Church and the World, we now give utterance to our sentiments.

The Christian Church, during the eighteen centuries of her existence, has greatly varied her relations to the World. She was, at first, under the world's foot; then, in turn, she set her foot upon its neck; now, she stands by its side. Some, indeed, sigh for the return of the primitive state, in which persecution was the lot of the Church, as securing greater purity and zeal in her members. But we cannot participate in that love of persecution. Equally far are our sympathies from those gentlemen who are preparing opiates for the world, that they may once more rock it to sleep in the tender arms of an ambitious hierarchy. Rather will we sound the alarm-trumpet, and warn the World that every opiate administered by these robed physicians, however agreeable to its aching consciences, prepares the way for robbing them of their dearest rights. We must thank God that we live in peaceful days; not for the indulgence of ease, but for the better opportunity to benefit the world. We must be thankful, too, that Star-Chambers and Inquisitions, Papal bulls, canon and feudal laws, exist no longer. We now, by the grace of God, stand side by side with the World. And the more full our understanding of each other's views, the more amicable will our relations be, and the more comfortable our intercourse. We are fellow-passengers, crossing life's great sea. Our ultimate destinations are very different; but on the way, we are embarked in the same ship. And it is worth a little pains to come to some understanding, in order to diminish, as far as possible, the inconveniences of a passage, rough enough, at the best. Two princes might be returning in the same ship to the court of their sovereign; the one, to recover his titles, the other, to inhabit a dungeon. Such things have been in God's providence, and under righteous human administrations, too. And when the Scriptures affirm that analogous events occur in the world yet future and unseen to us, we are docile and confiding enough to believe their testimony, and bold enough to repeat it, and to affirm that the most vital distinction between man and man, is that of those "who do not obey the Gospel," and those "who believe, to the saving of their souls."

Digitized by Google

"It is a terrible doctrine!" It is; because sin is terrible, and terrible the destiny to which it leads. And if we might succeed in inducing in any mind a new train of thought on this subject, we should deem our success the highest reward. Suppose, for instance, instead of starting back from this painful topic, and relieving yourself with an indignant exclamation at the bigotry of other people, you should for a moment begin to question, Whether, for once, they may not be right, and you wrong? And then, suppose you put it on this ground: "I will refer the whole matter to Jesus Christ. If these people are right, my situation is most alarming; I will look into it." There we will leave you. If Jesus, our Lord, has not founded all his addresses to men on this distinction, if he has not drawn a line running through time to the judgment-day, and thence extending onwards through eternity, leaving one portion of mankind on one side, and another portion on the other, then we shall insist on our views no longer.

But we are solicitous to have the world change some of its notions concerning us, because we believe they are founded on misapprehensions. To many, it seems impossible that those in the church, can be other than uncharitable toward those out of the church. To them we cite the case of our Lord, loving the rich young ruler, who came to him for religious counsel. Here was charity, and even admiration. There were many excellent points in this character. But he lacked "one thing." That one thing in Christ's estimation, was the essential thing. Peter, perhaps, had not as much native loveliness, as this amiable youth. But Peter had the germ of life in him; a love that would ultimately ripen, after it had been carefully nurtured by a divine guardian, and had experienced many trials, into a perfect character; renouncing all for Christ, and living to bless the world. But this young man was, at that moment, essentially "of the world." His home, his heart, his hope, were in it. Now, could Christ love him, as he loved Peter? This case exhibits the fact we desire here to make prominent; that true charity, like Christ's love, admits of many subordinate degrees of admiration; while its supreme approbation is given to no form of natural character, but solely to the regenerated character. It admits of estimating every good quality at its real worth; genius, taste, integrity, courtesy; it admits that a regenerated person, at times, and in certain respects, may enjoy the society of some unregenerated persons more than

Digitized by Google

that of some members of the church, because the latter exhibit more of the natural defects of their character or manners yet unsubdued, than of the higher principles which have really begun to live and operate in them. "The kingdom of heaven is a little leaven," leavening the whole mass. Still, there is an essential spirit in the world, to which every regenerated man is averse. "The friendship of the world, is enmity with God. Whosoever, therefore, will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God." It often occurs, that the views and feelings of Christians are misunderstood in regard to amusements. A member of the Church, for instance, is requested "just" to participate in this amusement, "just" to go here or there; or, a parent is solicited by his child to let him go, for such and such children are going. Is it "uncharitable, bigoted, morose," for him to discern that the peculiar spirit of the world is to preside over that occasion, and to pervade that assembly; and that he or his children cannot go there without either injuring themselves, or sanctioning what may injure others? Many, however, of a serious cast of mind, could tolerate all this well enough; but with them, the offensive point is, the exclusiveness of this pretension of "being the only good people in the world," and of "having all heaven to themselves."

This objection might easily be retorted upon the objectors, by asking, whether their own views of character and of happiness do not compel them to adopt an exclusive principle of association. They esteem their social circle as including the *elite* of society. Yes, but then it excludes, too. Is not their parlor their paradise, and their festive board their earthly heaven? But does *their* charity urge them out into the highways and hedges, to compel the poor, and the lame, and the blind, and the ignorant and rude, to come in and enjoy it? No, that would spoil their heaven, because their happiness is derived from social affinities. And may not the happiness of regenerated men embrace the same principle, without making them less charitable than the world? The Bible declares that certain characteristics distinguish them who are truly of the Church. Now we believe the Bible firmly and cordially for ourselves. We judge character by its standard; we form our anticipations of our own destiny, and of other men's destiny, by it. In all this we cannot see that there is any want of charity, any moroseness, any mere "stickling for a creed."

Digitized by Google

There is also a misapprehension in regard to the bigotry of the Church. Earnestness is mistaken for harshness, firmness for dogmatism. In a word, many imagine that "orthodox" men in particular, are unfavorable to true liberty. We are not now in an argumentative mood, or we should certainly spread out the historical testimony on this subject, and shew that Calvinism, with all its imagined intolerance, has been most intimately allied with all those great and laborious movements of the English people, by which religious liberty and the rights of conscience have been incorporated into human laws and institutions.

Let us then understand what ideas we mutually affix to liberty of conscience. It is the right of every human being to see the evidence of truth with his own eyes; to believe it on evidence, and not on human authority; to practise it unmolested; and to propagate it in every way that does not interfere with the rights or freedom of any other man. And if, in this exercise of his own faculties and freedom, he misjudges, and apprehends religious error for truth, he is not for this accountable to man; he is not to be hated by any man; he is not to be visited with civil penalties or social disabilities. We are fully convinced that God has endowed every human being with these rights, to be held inalienable. We fully believe that true religion can never prosper and prevail, but where such freedom is enjoyed. We are more than convinced of the soundness of these principles; we are fervently attached to them. We know nothing which we deem it so proper to "resist unto blood," as an encroachment on these rights as enjoyed by us. They are a boon which we crave most earnestly for all the nations of the earth, and for every member of the human family. We prize it as much for the Infidel and the Papist, as for ourselves. There is then surely no difference between the World and the Church on that point. And in the exercise of that freedom, we think for ourselves; we maintain our opinions, affirm, defend and propagate them. We hold the distinction between truth and error, to be immutable and eternal; that the consequences of religious errors are infinitely more dreadful than of errors in nautical science, in political science, or any other department of knowledge. We believe that men must account to God for their erroneous principles, as well as their evil practices; and that we cannot shew our charity to mankind more fully, than in trying to bring them to believe "the truth as it is in Jesus."

Digitized by Google

If the rights of conscience should ever be invaded in this land, we are sure that no firmer bulwark will be found, than in the men who belong to the Church; we are sure that the most rigorous Calvinist will stand by the side of the most "liberal" freethinker, in the hottest of the fight. But the difference between them will be, that the one uses his freedom for his own destruction; the other, if sincere, uses the lower freedom from human despotism, to obtain the higher form of freedom from the tyranny of sin in his own heart; and this alone gives religious liberty its value.

ABHORRENCE OF EVIL.

GENUINE piety is always Janus-faced. It presents an aspect of complacency toward all that is excellent, and an aspect of hostility toward all that is evil. There is the same countenance, but it looks in opposite directions, and with opposite expressions. As a man thinketh in his heart, not in his head, so is he; and if he would know what the real sympathies of his heart are, he must subject it to a two-fold test. Its seeming appetencies cannot be relied upon, unless there be a corresponding principle of repulsion. As by a proof, or counter-process, we determine the correctness of a mathematical result, so must we try the sincerity of religious affections. It would be singular indeed, if the power of perceiving relations, which is so prominent in our mental constitution, should have nothing to do in this sphere of morals. The opposites, *right* and *wrong*, *ought* and *ought not*, being essential and unalterable, we can have nothing to do with one member of this momentous contrast, without being equally concerned with the other. This is a principle which appears not to be sufficiently appreciated. Attention needs to be directed to that side of the great dividing line, which is less frequently contemplated in treating of religious character and spiritual growth.

"Ye that love the Lord, hate evil." This sanctified aversion is at once the correlative and test of holy love. Nothing is more common than for men to deceive themselves and others by a vehement and apparently honest advocacy of right and virtue, while their hearts are untouched by the mere sentiments they

Digitized by Google

avow. The judgment and imagination may be decidedly enlisted, and the inclination be as decidedly opposite. This inner variance is the source of those glaring inconsistencies which meet us everywhere in history and observation. Seneca, so just, so persuasive in his advocacy of self-denial and moderation of desires, wrote his severe lessons upon a table of gold, — the same table from which he loaned with usury his millions. Sir Thomas More, in his Utopia, advocates religious toleration; though, at the same time, he could persecute Protestants with rack and fagot.

"Abhor that which is evil." Mere dislike is not enough. There should be aversion in its strongest exercise, namely, abhorrence, — a starting back of the soul in an instinctive, energetic recoil. To refrain from evil is not enough; war must be declared, and a vigorous hostility maintained. Treaty, truce, or parley may never be tolerated. It is aversion to moral evil, of course, which we speak of, and evil on its own account; and not evil as affecting our convenience or happiness. The supremely selfish may be inflamed at every annoyance to themselves, yet very calmly contemplate the most flagrant sin or outrage which lies out of their immediate personal sphere. They are not so much averse to sin, as to trouble. Obliquity, seen in our own party, or family, yea, in our own self, is just as much to be detested as when seen elsewhere. "I loathe and abhor myself," was Job's feeling. There was a Roman, who, to escape proscription, fled from the capital; and to prevent detection, counterfeited blindness in one eye. When, after many months, the danger was past, and he removed the covering, he could not open the eye. He had in reality destroyed its use. That man had a most hearty dislike to the vindictive intolerance of the triumvirs; probably, also to deceit in general, but not to hypocrisy in himself. Many such patriots, and too many nominal Christians, like him, are there now. But deformity, physical or moral, does not become beauty by being mine rather than another's. Henry Martyn could say: "Men frequently admire me, and I am pleased; but I abhor the the pleasure that I feel."

As already remarked, the repugnance now spoken of should be exercised toward that which is wrong, because it is wrong; a spiritual taste being cultivated which is instinctively averse to sin. Sickness, and other causes, may suspend many unlawful desires, and perhaps temporarily disable from their gratification, while

Digitized by Google

the individual becomes no more virtuous, and has no more desire for conformity to God, than before. The venomous serpent is a hateful object; whatever apparent beauty of color or motion it may exhibit, whatever fascination it may practise, it is a hateful object; the bosom is not the place for it. If the viper fasten upon the hand, it should at once be shaken into the fire. So ought we to feel and to deal with respect to sin. Of all things shunned and dreaded, that is the most dreadful. Galley slaves, leprous outcasts, starving maniacs let us be, rather than sinners against God. The worst part of perdition is not the undying worm, the dreadful writhings of despair; but the frightful scars, and the fresh and growing wounds of sin.

Single out any one of the vices. Look at impurity, and it is only with unmitigated detestation, that, in any form, it may be contemplated. To respect and extol chastity is not enough. Sallust could write and talk eloquently against the prevailing Roman licentiousness; and yet, by his habitual and notorious debaucheries, lay himself open to repeated accusations before the Senate. Rousseau could compose versions of the Psalms, full of seeming unction; and also productions infamously licentious. Profession and mere opinions determine nothing. The great point is, How is the imagination occupied? Am I mentally chaste?

Look at intemperance. This indulgence is not to be reprobated so much because it undermines health and property, or because it begets idleness and pauperism, as because it is a beastly and wicked practice. It is to be loathed and renounced for debasing, as well as destroying, the soul. Proper aversion to it is not the aversion felt exclusively to the use of intoxicating drinks; but to the unauthorized indulgence in other stimulants, and in eating too. The man who will apologize for one sinful gratification, on the ground that there are others even worse, and the man who makes the sum of virtue to consist in some one moral excellence, are alike mistaken. While no drunkard can enter heaven, many a sober man does enter hell. Fractional morality will not suffice. The Manichees abstained from wine, calling it "the gall of the prince of darkness," but rioted in other liquors, equally pernicious; and in certain viands, too, no less pleasing to the palate than those which they prohibited. In a religious point of view, as well no abstinence, as such abstinence. The very first element of true temperance is wanting. Let stringent statutes be

Digitized by Google

enacted, but let a more stringent public sentiment be formed, which shall sustain those laws in all their severe integrity; and most of all, let the foundation of that sentiment be a deep religious abhorrence of this and every vice. "I hate *every* false way;" such were the ethics of David. Where proper aversion exists to any one sin, on account of its intrinsic demerit, similar aversion will of course be felt toward every sin, so far as discovered. Hence the propriety of the declaration often made, that indulgence in one known sin neutralizes all claims to Christian character. It implies the absence of holy principle; so that whatever alleged piety there be, one allowed sin vitiates the whole.

Of all the follies and inconsistencies of which blind man is guilty, none can equal those that abound in this department of his universal and daily history. One illustration will make the point plain. The freebooters who formerly infested the sea in the region of the West India Islands, were, in their way, quite religious. They never embarked on an expedition, without first publicly invoking the favor of God; nor were they wont to return from a successful and bloody cruise, without formally returning thanks. An educated pirate, speaking of the quarrels between the French and English freebooters, says: "One of the chief causes of our disagreement was the impiety of the English; for they made no scruple when they got into a church, to cut down the arms of a crucifix with their sabres, or to shoot them down with their fusils and pistols; bruising and maiming the saints in the same manner." Here we have Beelzebub berating his companions. The French Catholic pirates could not endure the English Protestant pirates, on account of their sacrilege! In the most fraternal spirit of butchery, they could see, — aye, could help their English associates coolly to sever the limbs and cut the throats of living victims, but if the wooden images of saints received injury, these religious villains, forsooth, were shocked! Bloodshed and rapine quite a praiseworthy occupation; but the conscientious monsters could not away with an affront to the senseless symbols of their superstition!

Now, in the proposition to conduct our recent war with Mexico, or any needless war, on Christian principles, there is much of the same inconsistency. The same is there in not a little of the boasting about equal rights and the perfection of liberty in our land, where thousands upon thousands are held in unrighteous

Digitized by Google

bondage; the same, too, in those wrathful advocates of anti-slavery, who carry on an equally vehement crusade against the Christian church and ministry; the same, also, in every corrupt community of Christians, who tolerate superstition, vice and cruelty, but will not tolerate truth and the rights of conscience; who scrupulously exact the tithe of mint, anise and cummin, but neglect the weightier matters of the law, — judgment, mercy, and faith.

There is at the present time, to a sad extent, a spurious charity, an ultraism of tenderness, which threatens, if not checked, to unman the nation. This religious coxcombry may be seen bustling about in a sickly sympathy for the criminal. It christens itself by the attractive name, "Prisoner's Friend." In one hand the blear-eyed spectre carries a copy of the Anti-hangman, and in the other, a petition for the pardon of the last cold-blooded murderer. But we may as well bow to Juggernaut, as to the idol of fanatical charity. At this demoniacal quixotism of morals the hosts of darkness must "grin horribly a ghastly smile."

Moral or religious consistency need not be sought in a man or body of men where aversion to evil, as such, does not exist. There can be no complete harmony among our moral sentiments, and between our opinions and our conduct, if there be not a sanctified abhorrence of what is wrong, because it is wrong, — wrong intrinsically, and opposed to the will and character of the just and holy God. No genuine love of excellence can exist without it. The two correspond as the impression and the seal.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

No truth in the Word of God is more interesting than the statement, that there is an action of the Holy Spirit to "bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of God;" Rom. viii. 16; for what fact is so momentous, so affecting to the feelings, or leads to such consequences?

Yet, perhaps no truth has been more abused to pernicious results. Enthusiasts, of all ages, have claimed the possession of this witness, and by it have been fortified against the dictates of sober reason and experience; and, in consequence of it, run into

Digitized by Google

numberless errors and excesses. Others, reacting from this extreme, have fallen into another, and have virtually denied any witness of the Spirit at all.

Yet, not only in the passage just referred to, but in many others, is the doctrine taught, that there is a direct influence of the Spirit on our minds, by which we are assured of our interest in God, and of his favor towards us. "The Spirit of truth the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

It may then be profitable to consider the erroneous principles from which these extreme views originate, and to illustrate the Scriptural doctrine that lies between them.

The radical principle of the enthusiastic extreme is this: that the Holy Spirit, as a witness, by a direct testimony, communicates to the individual concerned, an immediate and infallible assurance that his sins are forgiven, and that he is an object of divine favor. This obviously implies a direct and special revelation to the soul, of a particular fact not contained in the Word of God; so that the knowledge of the fact is not a matter of inference from something else, but is immediate and direct. Thus, if the fact of the certainty of my salvation were stated to me in an audible voice, known to come from God, then it would be needless for me to examine the character of my mental exercises, and finding them right, to infer that I am therefore a child of God. The direct revelation of God removes all uncertainty, and renders all such processes of reasoning needless. Where we can rest our assurance on the omniscience of God, we may well reject the needless support of a process of reasoning.

But, if such a knowledge of our salvation is given, not by a voice, but by some mysterious, inward, direct revelation, the result is the same. There is a direct knowledge of a particular fact given by God, and of course without a process of reasoning.

Or, if there are impulses or emotions which can be lawfully taken as direct signs from God, that we are pardoned and entitled to eternal life, then by these impulses or emotions the question is directly settled, and there is no need of drawing inferences from retrospection, and an examination of the nature and tendencies of our mental exercises.

Digitized by Google

The dangerous nature of the principle that we have described, will be sufficiently obvious, if we reflect that it involves an entire subversion of the proper use of the reasoning powers, with respect to the evidences of Christian character, and exposes us to mistake nervous excitements, and the morbid actings of the imagination, or even the impulses and suggestions of Satan turned into an angel of light, for the witness of the Spirit of God. It tends also to create an unhealthy craving for excitements and impulses, and thus to destroy the symmetry of Christian character, and to render religious enjoyment spasmodic and transient. Instead of the healthy glow of a constant spiritual life, there is the exhausting fire of a periodical fever, with intervening periods of chilliness or of torpor.

In these remarks we are not exposing errors that are imaginary, or that have occurred only in the history of other ages. The false principle now under consideration, is at this time extensively held; it is advocated and defended with great zeal, and it actually produces, in many instances, all the evils which have been specified, in their worst forms.

One leading advocate of it says: "The testimony of the Spirit of God is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God *directly witnesses to my spirit* that I am a child of God." He also teaches that this witness precedes our love to God, and is the cause of it: "We cannot love God till we know that he loves us. We love him because he first loves us; and we cannot know his love to us, till his Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. Till then we cannot believe it." The possibility of such a witness he argues from the power of God to speak directly to the soul, and to cause the soul to know who it is that speaks. And he tells us: "He does effect it; the soul is absolutely assured this is the voice of God." The criteria by which such a voice is known, he does not attempt to explain; nay, he says that it cannot be done, "no, not by one that has the deepest knowledge of God."

Now can any view be better adapted than this, to produce selfish conversions, based on the idea thrown into the mind by voices, or visions, or impulses, or even by texts of holy Scripture suddenly suggesting, that I am a child of God? Can anything tend more directly to give up the mind to the impulses of nervous excitement, or to the visions of an overwrought imagination? Can anything tend more directly to entangle the soul in the snares of

Digitized by Google

of Satan, to be led captive by him at his will? Can anything more entirely shield it against the suggestions of those rational powers through which God designs to guide the mind? "God has spoken to me. I cannot tell how; I can give you no proof that it is his voice; but I know that it is, — I am sure; he has made me so."

Though we have quoted but one author, representing but one denomination, still the dangerous views we are endeavoring to expose are not limited to any one denomination. They have been inculcated and reduced to practice within the bounds of various Christian communions, and in all seasons of religious excitement they naturally make their appearance. Indeed we have been induced to undertake the present discussion, because we have detected their incursions, here and there, among the members of our own churches.

They are the more seductive, because there is nothing in them that tends to produce deep conviction of sin, or to humble pride. On the other hand, nothing can be more acceptable to a proud and conceited man, than the idea of such a special, direct revelation to him of the fact that he is a peculiar and especial favorite of the King of kings. There is still greater danger, if in connexion with such a supposed divine communication, there is also an impression of being called and destined to perform some great work for God. Of nothing are conceited men so easily persuaded, as of this, and no persuasion more directly tends to inflate the mind with augmented pride, and to precipitate it headlong into the snares of the devil.

It deserves particular notice, that this false view of the witness of the Spirit as effectually divorces the mind from the Scriptures as from reason. It does not first find in the Word of God, promises of pardon made to repentance and faith, and then seek in the mind for evidence of repentance and faith; and having found it, infer that the sinner is pardoned on the ground of the divine veracity. Rising above the Scriptures and experience, it seeks for a direct and special revelation of this fact from God himself. In this respect it coincides with the various delusive theories of an inward light which have been held by mystics, ancient and modern. All of these theories are characterized by one and the same result; under pretence of honoring the direct communications of God, they exalt the interior light above revelation. And the

Digitized by Google

effect of claiming a direct revelation to the mind of the great truth of the reality and certainty of personal salvation, is the same. The belief of the most important of all facts, is made to rest, not on the revealed Word of God, but upon a new and special revelation, independent of that Word. No person now living, can find it revealed in the Word of God, that he is in fact pardoned; and this is the very reason of the proneness of anxious minds to resort to this theory of the direct witness of the Spirit. The rational process of examining the revealed conditions of pardon, and the evidence of having complied with them, and thence deriving an assurance of salvation through the Word of God, does not satisfy the excited and anxious feelings of many. They desire something more personal, more sensible, more tangible. They long to hear God say directly to them: "Thy sins are forgiven!" and under the influence of this desire, they forsake the safe grounds of humble faith in the Word of God, and plunge into the currents and whirlpools of the tumultuous sea of enthusiastic and fanatical excitement. All indeed are not ruined who believe in this principle. Often by a happy inconsistency they give to the Word of God an influence which this theory denies to it, and are thereby saved from shipwreck. But this is not because of the theory, but in spite of it, and in very many cases its worst tendencies are verified by fatal results.

Let us next consider the opposite extreme, into which many have fallen in avoiding this. It consists in the virtual exclusion, or actual denial of an action of the Spirit of God on our minds, of the effects of which we may be truly conscious, and properly refer to him, as plainly transcending our own power, and requiring him as the Author. It is both reasonable and Scriptural to suppose, that the Holy Spirit is able to exert a peculiar influence upon our intellectual powers, our imagination, our trains of thought, our emotions, and our belief, which shall impress us with a rational conviction that it is from without. Moreover, the nature and effects of this influence may be such, that we recognize in them a fulfilment of something described and promised in the Word of God, as effected by the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the results may be directly opposed to all of the natural tendencies of proud, sensual, self-justifying minds. The mind may be filled with an overwhelming sense of sin, with terror in view of the threatened judgments of God, with penitence, faith,

Digitized by Google

hope, joy, or ecstacy, by an an influence plainly superior to itself. The spirit of bondage to fear may be taken away; the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father, may be given. The things of the eternal world may be invested with a vividness and brilliancy, such as we feel incapable of producing by our own power. We may be unable to resist the impression that we are under the influence of a present, powerful, and holy Mind, who is aiming to transform us into the image of God.

Our faith may be raised to such degrees of certainty, that the things of the spiritual world shall seem like living, present realities, entirely outweighing and eclipsing the things of time and sense. Now it is plain, that if the Holy Spirit produces such states of mind, and if we recognize them as from him, and as a fulfilment of revealed promises, then by them he witnesses to us that we are the sons of God.

Now if all regard to such spiritual influences, felt to be from without, is excluded, and the attention is fixed simply upon a predominant purpose which we have formed to serve God, and upon our own general principles and conduct, then we are in the opposite extreme; for now there is plainly nothing left to which the words can be applied, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

There is nothing now left but the solitary action of one spirit, instead of the concurrent action of two; and we thus in effect set aside the great Scriptural doctrine of a real and conscious communion with God. Now while we admit, that evidence of Christian character may be derived from inspecting the solitary action of our own minds; still, we hold that it is not possible to rise to that height of assurance which is implied in the witness of the Spirit, without that sensible communion with God which it is his peculiar prerogative to produce.

Turning then from the extremes that have been pointed out, let us proceed still further to illustrate the Scriptural doctrine that lies between them.

We are abundantly informed in the Word of God, that the human mind was not made to be perfected by its own independent activity, and without the aid of a divine and supernatural influence. It was made to be perfected by communion with God, and cannot secure its true life and development without him, any more than the plant can live and flourish without the sustain-

Digitized by Google

ing power of the soil. So long as united to God, his vivifying influences preserve all the powers in a state of healthy activity and development. On the other hand, when separated from him by sin, the mind is at once pervaded and ruined by moral disease. The intellectual powers are darkened, the emotions become passionate and corrupt, and the will unreasonable and stubborn. The great end of God, therefore, is to restore such fallen minds, through Christ, to a state of moral health, purity, and rationality; and to reëstablish that spiritual communion with them in thought and emotion, upon which depends their eternal life. This communion is reëstablished by the Spirit by influences which we often recognize as from without; but inasmuch as we cannot have direct and intuitive evidence that they are from God, we must seek for evidence in their tendencies and effects. Influences from without may proceed from two sources, the Spirit of holiness, on the one hand; and Satan changed into an angel of light, on the other. We are not, therefore, to regard all actings on our minds from without which transcend our power to produce them, as from God; but those only which primarily tend to produce spiritual life, by convincing of sin, humbling and purifying the soul, and restoring it to its normal state.

In the body, the distinction between health and disease, is perfectly obvious. The man who has a fever knows it; and if he is healed, he recognizes with absolute certainty returning health. So also spiritual health, as opposed to spiritual disease, conveys evidence of its reality to the soul, which removes all doubt. If the consuming fires of unholy passion cease to exhaust the life of the soul, if holiness, humility, tenderness, meekness, and other Christian graces reign within, then the soul realizes the true joys of spiritual life, and is sure that it lives. It is no less sure that the influences through which it lives, are from God.

Hence to this result did our Saviour refer his disciples, as the evidence by which they might know that their communion was really with him. "Because I live, ye shall live also." And as the result of this, he immediately adds, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." Here more is promised than the solitary action of one mind. The promise ensures the indwelling of the believer in Christ, and of Christ in him, by holy spiritual communion; and the proof that the communion is with Christ, is found in the fact that it produces

Digitized by Google

a supernatural spiritual life, which he only has power to produce. The Spirit, then, witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God, by producing communion with God, and the evidence that our communion is with God, and not with deceiving spirits, is found in its effects, in producing in us the true and spiritual life of God.

Let us next briefly consider the evidence that such communion is a reality, and that it does produce the highest possible assurance of our filial relationship to God.

Sufficient proof of the fact might be found in the promises of Christ to his disciples before he left the world. When the Deity became incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ, he interchanged thoughts and emotions with his disciples through the organs of the human body. Here was a real and sensible communion with them. Now, when communion in this form was about to cease, they feared lest they should be left in desolate solitude. To cheer them, he assured them that their communion with him should not cease. That he would come to them, manifest himself to them, dwell in them, and cause them to dwell in him, and so fill them with his joy that their joy should be full.

But these promises do not apply to them alone. Although there is no visible form through which God now communes with us, still there may be a real interchange of thoughts and emotions between him and us, attended with a mental consciousness that it is so. We may know that we are in him, and he in us. Nor is our ignorance of the mode in which God thus communes, an argument against the reality of the communion.

When one of the disciples inquired, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world, he gave no explanation of the mode, but simply reässerted the fact: "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him."

In accordance with these promises, the beloved disciple speaks of knowing and believing the love that God hath towards us, and of dwelling in God, and of God as dwelling in us; Paul too, speaks of Christ as dwelling in the heart by faith, and of our knowing the height and depth, and length and breadth of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and of being filled with all the fulness of God. The effects of such communion are also described. They are a perfect satisfaction of the soul. Christ's

Digitized by Google

joy is in us, and our joy is full, — it is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The records of such experience in the Word of God are numerous and full, — David and Asaph, Isaiah and Paul, and the beloved disciple, have left on record their experience of this supernatural communion with God, their perfect joy while it continued, their longing after it when it ceased.

And in the experience of eminent uninspired saints, similar testimony is found. The account of his own experience by President Edwards so fully describes the idea of life in Christ, that it will not be amiss to quote it.

"Once, as I rode out into the woods, for my health, in 1737, having alighted from my horse in a retired place, as my manner commonly has been, to walk for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God, as mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. This grace that appeared so calm and sweet, appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception, which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears, and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to express, emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust, and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love, to trust in him, to live upon him, to serve and follow him, and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly purity. I have several other times had views very much of the same nature, and which have had the same effects." In another place he says: "God, in the communications of his Holy Spirit, has appeared as an infinite fountain of divine glory and sweetness; being full, sufficient to fill and satisfy the soul; pouring forth itself in sweet communications, like the sun in its glory, sweetly and pleasantly diffusing light and life."

We do not quote such passages as furnishing an example of common Christian experience. President Edwards speaks of it as extraordinary in his own case. But we design by it to illustrate the power with which the Spirit can witness our sonship to

Digitized by Google

our minds, whenever he pleases, and to illustrate by a striking example, the great subject of our present discussion.

The influence of such communion on the mind also deserves notice. It imparts to it by sympathy a portion of the qualities of the divine mind. It becomes a "partaker of the divine nature." The thoughts, emotions, purity, healthiness, vital energy, tenderness, susceptibility, and beauty of the divine mind, are imparted to it by communion. God is the exhaustless source of all these things, and the highest vital energy of the mind is not in itself, but in him. Hence, by the metaphor of a vine and its branches, Christ enjoins the necessity of a permanent life in him, thus produced, as the indispensable condition of energy and fruitfulness, in Christian words and deeds.

When we call the influence thus exerted on the mind, supernatural, we do not mean that it is unnatural. It pertains, as we have said, to the nature of all created minds, that they cannot be rightly developed and perfected, except by such communion with God.

We call it supernatural, for two reasons. One, that regarding all the created universe as nature, it is an influence not proceeding from it, but from the uncreated God, who is above nature.

Again, regarding the existing moral nature of the human race as depraved, and, to be out of communion with God, as the universal law of such depraved existences, communion with God is above and contrary to such a nature, though in accordance with the true end, and real laws of the mind. So, if all men were born blind, and by divine intervention sight were restored to some, to see the sun would be above the nature with which men were born, although in accordance with the real end and laws of the eye.

From what we have said, it is plain that this view of the witness of the Spirit, does not tend to supersede the use of written revelation, under the pretext that the mind is not to be bound down to the dead letter of old documents. On the other hand, God communes with us through his Word, and it is his purpose so to elevate the mind, that it may come into a sympathetic perception of his own enlarged and glorious understanding of it. Communion with a teacher does not supersede the study of the text-books which he uses, but guides into his full understanding of them. So, communion with God guides into a full under-

Digitized by Google

standing of his great text-book, the Bible. He does not add to it, or take away from it, but opens our eyes to behold wonderful things in it.

Nor does its influence cease here. God is the real author and teacher of all truth. Some things he teaches by the very structure of the human mind; some in the great book of his providence, some in the book of his works. These are all alike books of God; and truly interpreted will harmonize, elucidate, and sustain what he teaches in his Word. Communion with God, therefore, tends to open our eyes to understand his interpretation of these books, and thus to harmonize all truth.

Nor does this lead to an unhealthy, unintelligent craving after mere excitement, nor does it destroy the balance of the mind. On the other hand, it restores the mind to health, vigor, and balance. The mind was made for high degrees of feeling; otherwise it would not have been correlated to God. Hence it craves excited feeling of some kind.

But if the feeling is unhealthy, it gives no rest to the mind. Selfish, malignant, proud emotions are in their nature feverish, and their exercise gives the mind no repose.

But if the emotions are benevolent, tender, meek, and pure, a powerful exercise of them is healthy, and satisfies the craving of the mind, and gives it rest. In diseased feeling we find the elements of the misery of hell, where they rest not day nor night; in holy feeling, of the happiness of heaven, where the rest of the people of God is eternal.

Hence, the natural result of elevated communion with God, is holy peace. All the desires of the soul are satisfied, all fear of evil is removed, and the mind participates in the tranquillity of God himself. The peace of God that passeth all understanding, keeps the heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

It is here worthy of special notice, that the highest degrees of communion with God cannot be reached till the mind is eminently purified from sin. Hence, in the experience of Edwards, periods of deep conviction of sin, and self-loathing, preceded his seasons of most intimate communion with God, and prepared the way for them. By thus banishing all tendencies to irreverence or self-complacency, the soul is prepared for the highest manifestations of divine favor. But when these are made, the mind exercises the love for which it was created, and mutual manifestation and

Digitized by Google

mutual joy exist. The joy of each fills the other, and the joy is full. Each seems to be in the other. The love of Christ that passeth knowledge is known, and the soul is filled with all the fulness of God. The loving kindness of God is felt to be better than life. It causes joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is a love strong as death; it is like coals of fire that hath a most vehement flame; waters cannot quench it, floods cannot drown it. In comparison with it, the whole of a man's substance is utterly despised.

But as the emotions of God are free from disease, so are those of the mind under the influence of his love; it is healed of all feverish excitement, and truly lives. Its emotions are vastly more powerful than ever before, but perfectly reasonable, and under control. All blinding passions pass away; it walks in pure light, the light of God, the light of truth, the light of love.

LETTER TO HON. JOHN C. CALHOUN.

Dear Sir:

I have been deeply interested, both recently and on former occasions, with your zealous and incessant efforts to defend the system of American slavery. Whatever may be thought of your opinions, it must be conceded that your conduct in their promulgation and defence, has been, in general, consistent with itself. You do not, like some, concede that slavery is a great evil, social, civil, and moral, and then employ all your energies to perpetuate its existence. On the other hand, you defend it as a desirable system, sanctioned by the Word of God, and as the only permanent basis of free institutions; and you forebode the ultimate ruin of the northern portions of our Republic, or at least the reduction of the working classes to slavery, as the inevitable result of our want of the conservative influences of negro slavery.

Relying upon your love of consistency, and on your moral courage as manifested in so resolutely encountering the predominant opinions of the age, — for that these are increasingly hostile to the system of slavery you frankly admit, — I am emboldened to propose a mode of defending the system you so much love, which seems hitherto to have escaped your reflections.

Digitized by Google

It first occurred to me on the anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, in 1620, upon the rock of Plymouth. After the emotions of my soul had been aroused to the highest pitch, by meditating upon the sublimity of the principles embodied in their institutions, and the influence exerted, and to be exerted, by them upon the world, my attention was arrested by the striking fact, that the year 1620 was rendered memorable, not only by the landing of the Pilgrims on the rock of Plymouth, but also by the landing of the founders of American slavery on the shores of the James river, in Virginia. It at once struck me that you and your friends have been guilty of a great oversight, in never having established a suitable yearly commemoration of so great an event. Surely, the introduction into this Union of the great corner-stone of free institutions, is not an event to be passed over in silence, and consigned to oblivion.

And yet, how little notice has ever been taken by you, of this important event. The names of the philanthropic men engaged in the transaction, have never as yet been emblazoned on the rolls of fame. All that we can discover is simply that, in the words of a celebrated historian, "a Dutch man-of-war entered James River, and landed twenty negroes for sale." We are not even informed on what day of the month, the enterprising crew of this Dutch man-of-war first stepped upon the shores of Virginia, the mother of states and of statesmen. Perhaps they landed upon a rock. If so, we are not informed of the important fact, nor is the rock pointed out for the veneration of posterity. The chairs, too, in which these illustrious Dutchmen were wont to sit, are not preserved with pious reverence; their armor is not shewn, and their portraits are not suspended for admiring gaze! All has been suffered to fall into blank oblivion, except the naked inference that said Dutch man-of-war must have had a commander and a crew, otherwise she could not have landed twenty slaves on the shores of Virginia.

This strange neglect may in part be accounted for by the fact, that Washington, Jefferson, and other distinguished sons of the South, were in the dark as to the real merits of the system of slavery. It is plain that their minds were beclouded by those prejudices which you are now laboring with so much zeal to expose. They even went so far as to believe that "all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights." What

Digitized by Google

you have since stated, to expose the falsehood of this view, namely, that *men* are not created at all, but that they are born in a state of *childhood*, and with very unequal rights, some being free and some in slavery, — does not seem to have occurred to them. Nor had they, at that time, come to regard slavery as the corner-stone of free institutions; on the other hand, they feared that if it was not destroyed, it would become their destruction. But since their day, great progress has been made, and new light has dawned upon the real nature of this beneficent institution; and you, beyond all doubt, must be regarded as the leading spirit in this new movement, the great apostle of the doctrine that the only permanent basis of our free institutions, is negro slavery.

Would it not, then, be an important means of promulgating and defending your views, to establish an annual commemoration of the landing of the illustrious Dutchmen aforesaid, on the shores of Virginia? Why should the name of the Mayflower be famous in both hemispheres, and that of the Dutch man-of-war remain forever unknown? Why should the Pilgrims be canonized, and the Dutchmen forgotten? Why should not the zeal of antiquarian research at once enter this field, explore the archives of Virginia and of Holland, and restore to their proper place on the rolls of fame, the actors in this great event?

Consider, too, what a wide field for research and for eloquence would be opened, by such a yearly commemoration of the establishment of slavery. It was then but as a grain of mustard-seed. Only twenty slaves were landed. But now, over what wide regions the system is extended, and how many millions are now experiencing its influences. How zealous are its friends for its extension into those vast domains just acquired from Mexico. Certainly, no occasion could be more favorable for an enlarged view of the system as a whole, and of its benign effects as recorded on the page of history. Then would be the time to shew forth its auspicious influences upon religion, social purity, and national morals. Then, to shew its power to render labor honorable, and to promote industry and wealth, economy and thrift, in all classes of society. Then, to shew its influence in promoting popular education, and elevating the standard of intelligence in all classes.

On such an annual festival, too, it would be appropriate for you to explain by what strange oversight, the Honorable Waddy Thompson, in looking for the most striking contrast to the degra-

Digitized by Google

dation of Mexico, selected, not his native State of South Carolina, but Massachusetts, settled, as he tells us, "by the poor pilgrims of Plymouth, who carried with them nothing but their own hardy virtues and indomitable energy." "Massachusetts, with a sterile soil and ungenial climate, and no single article for exportation but ice and rock," and yet, "in productive industry, wide-spread diffusion of knowledge, public institutions of every kind, general happiness, and continually increasing prosperity; in letters, arts, morals, religion; in everything which makes a people great, there is not in the world, and there never was in the world, such a commonwealth as Massachusetts. There she is! look at her!" It will surely be a theme worthy even of your exalted talents, to show why a southern statesman, to find "everything that makes a people great," to find a commonwealth which he is willing to place at the head of the civilized world, should go to slavery-hating New England, and not to the sunny South, not even to the shores of Virginia, the mother of slavery.

It is the tendency of all truth to elevate the soul, and to produce a noble fearlessness of an overwhelming majority of opponents. The Puritans stood fearless against a world in arms. If, then, your views are true, why not act as if they were true? I admit that the world is against you, and the whole South is not with you. But what of that? Should truth fear numbers?

You have done much for slavery. But you have not yet reached the highest point of consistency. Adopt my proposal, enter upon it with zeal, and thoroughly carry it out, and then you will be fully consistent. For, if slavery is what you maintain, then the anniversary of its introduction ought thus to be commemorated. If New England has her Forefathers' Day, and is willing to glory in it before the world, then, if you and those who think with you, are not ashamed of your peculiar institutions, but glory in them, why not shew it forth, and assign your reasons before the world, on the banks of the river James, by orations, and prayers, and thanksgivings, and odes, and all the other arrangements of a solemn yearly festival?

Consider, too, what an addition would thus be made to the literature of the world. Odes in praise of slavery, are as yet a thing unknown. Perhaps, by such an anniversary, some southern Pindar will be aroused to fill so vast a void, and a literature of slavery be produced, worthy of the great event commemorated.

Digitized by Google

You have clearly indicated your conviction, that the existing literature of the world is against your beloved system. But should such a man as you, flee? Do not the exigencies of the day call for a mighty struggle? Is it not time to summon eloquence, poetry, music, and all the kindred fine arts, to labor in a field hitherto so entirely neglected?

It may be, after all that I have said, that you will consider such an anniversary as not appropriate, and see fit not to accept my proposal. If this should be the case, I have only one request to make, and that is, that you will state your reasons, and shew why it is appropriate to commemorate the landing of the Pilgrims on the rock of Plymouth, and not appropriate to commemorate, in a similar way, the landing on the shores of the James river, of the illustrious founders of those peculiar institutions of the South, to the defence of which your highest energies are devoted.

I am yours, respectfully,

A MASSACHUSETTS MAN.

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

THE BIRTH OF UNITARIANISM. — We have largely proved, in the former volumes of this work, that Unitarianism, in this country, had its origin in concealment. For proving this fact, by evidence derived from the Unitarians themselves, we have been soundly berated, though the charge cannot be confuted. But they are still presenting, of their own accord, new proofs of our allegation. A recent writer in the Christian Register, whose signature, F. P., seems to point him out as same who wrote the famous letter to Rev. John Grundy, in 1812, has been giving some account of the dismission of Rev. John Rogers from the pastoral care of the church in Leominster. This event took place in 1757. Mr. Rogers was condemned on account of heresy. We are told by F. P. that several members of the dismissing council, who were just such heretics as Mr. Rogers, voted throughout, for his censure and expulsion. One of these was Rev. Mr. Mellen, of Sterling, of whom F. P. relates the following incident, on the authority of the late Rev. Dr. Bancroft, a Unitarian minister of Worcester: "An intelligent and pious matron, a member of his church, thus addressed him: — 'Mr. Mellen, your religious opinions do not differ from those of Mr. Rogers. How, then, could you in conscience denounce him as an heretic, exhort him to retract his doctrines, and, in case of refusal, to advise the people of his charge to expel him from the Pastoral Office?' 'Why, dear madam,' answered he, 'Mr. Rogers is a very

Digitized by Google

indiscreet man, and is at least fifty years too early in preaching such doctrines from the pulpit.'" Yes, it took just about half a century of just such "discretion" to ripen the public mind for that open development of Unitarianism, which at last took place in due time, according to Mr. Mellen's reckoning. We venture to make this rich quotation from the Register, at the risk of being reviled as uncharitable and malignant, by those who have no other way to meet an unpleasant fact or an unwelcome truth.

THE PEARL OF DAYS. — This is a right noticeable book, written by a laborer's daughter, on "The advantages of the Sabbath to the working classes." The somewhat fanciful title reminds us of a passage in Philip Henry, who calls the sacred feast-day of the resurrection of our Lord, "The Queen of days, the Pearl of the Week, — the institution, a sign of God's love to us; the sanctification, a sign of our love to him." A friend of the Sabbath, in Great Britain, had proposed three premiums for the best treatises on this subject, which must be written by laboring men. The competitors reached the astonishing number of nine hundred and fifty; thus proving that there is "mind among the spindles," and other implements of industry, in the Old England, as well as in the New. And what is better, it proves in what estimation the corporeal, intellectual, and spiritual benefits of the Sabbath are held by the operatives of a country, where "the religion of the Sabbath" is better understood and practised than in any other country of Europe. The charming little book before us, was excluded from the competition by a strict construction, which held that a laborer's *daughter*, herself a hard-working woman, could not enter the lists which had been opened for "laboring men." Still it is published, with a dedication to the Queen of England, and with a sketch of the author's life, from her own pen. There could not be a happier argument for the influence of the Sabbath on the households of God's poor, and on the training of their children, than this little volume affords. We commend it for distribution in the next Anti-Sabbath Convention, if the next shall ever be called!

PROVERBS FOR THE PEOPLE. — This book was written to afford illustrations of Christian morals founded on the proverbs of Solomon. The author is Rev. E. L. Magoon, already known to the literary public. We can commend it "with a will," having read it nearly through at a sitting. It is instinct with life. "The spirit of the living creature is in the wheels." The book is not one of those tamely correct things, which neither commit a fault nor mend one, which have neither faults nor anything else. It abounds in those lesser blemishes which would keep a minor critic busy for a month. Its style, though rather ambitious, is careless and free, like the high-spirited and dashing hunter of the West. And as deadly is its aim, when levelled at the gay plumes of folly, the serpent-coils of sin, and the shaggy mane of vice. The author's reading and memory are immense. It is long since we have fallen in with such a "quotationipotent" book. It is a sort of cyclopedia of citations, from all authors, in prose and verse, relating to the subjects treated. Indeed, it herein runs to some excess;

Digitized by Google

and the reader will often feel, that some of the passages taken from older writers, are only cheating him out of something better of the author's own. But he is not wanting here. He has given much of his own inditing, which will hereafter be quoted in its turn by others. We admire this book; and yet we retain a long-cherished opinion, that the proper book on Christian morals is not yet written. The grand desideratum is a lively and pungent work on points of morality, composed in the highest fervors of evangelic feeling; and giving the same prominence to the work of Christ, and the work of the Spirit, in the discussion of moral duties, as in explaining experimental piety. What is wanted, is a detailed exhibition of Christian morality, penned in the likeness of those sketches which abound in the letters of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

DR. WAYLAND'S UNIVERSITY SERMONS. — This volume, like the preceding, is issued by the well-known enterprise of Gould, Kendall and Lincoln, of this city. It contains a selection from the sermons preached within four years, to the officers and students of Brown University; and it is interesting as a sample of the religious instruction imparted in the chapel of that celebrated seminary. It is pretty safe to commend Dr. Wayland without reading him; but this we are unwilling to do for our own sakes. We find his University Sermons to be soundly orthodox, according to the ideas of Thomas Hollis; and devoutly pious, according to the sentiments of all good men. His views of the positive institutions of the gospel are somewhat too "low church" for us, who, like our Puritan fathers, believe that Christ has not left his own redeemed kingdom without a divine constitution and laws. But we can easily forgive this fault, which is excessively rare among our excellent Baptist brethren. Dr. Wayland joins a generous zeal for the truth, with a noble catholicity of soul toward the brethren who do not "toe the tracks" exactly like himself. Were his largeness and warmth of heart to become general among those of his own exclusive communion, it would prove to be the life of their sect, and the death of their sectarianism. Would that such a temper might more fully pervade our own denomination, and every other! — We cannot close this notice, however, without a regret, that the magnanimity of Dr. Wayland has not raised him above the repetition of the old sing-song about Roger Williams and the Puritans. Mr. Williams undoubtedly had his merits, and, as some think, his deserts; but, as respects the comparison between him and the Puritans, we have proved to a demonstration, in the first volume of this work, that he had no real advantage over them. The descant which is so loudly rung to his superior praise, we have shewed to have more sound than sense, and to partake more of poetic license than of historic truth.

SCENES IN LUTHER'S LIFE. — Wonderful Luther! His life is a precious metal, in which the ablest workmen have delighted to shew their skill. This book is from the pastor of the Baptist Church in Malden, and evinces a Lutheran soul in its author, who is able to commune with the seraphic burnings of the fiery reformer. It is disfigured by too many defects, proving that its scenes, as the

Digitized by Google

author frankly confesses, "are not what they might have been, had a little more time been devoted to their preparation." This is but a poor excuse for hasty publication, as there is no reason for thinking that the "republic of letters" would not have patiently awaited his convenience. Still the book is full of spirit and glowing fervor, presenting, not a continuous biographical panorama, but a series of scenes like the views of the magic-lantern, where the outlines are dim and shadowy, and only the filling up is gorgeous and bright. Luther's mind was like a ponderous trip-hammer, working night and day, and forging a bolt at every blow. He once said familiarly among his friends at table: "Had I not bitten him to the bone, the pope would have swallowed us whole. I am the pope's perch, that hath sharp-pointed fins, which he is not able to devour. The pope in me hath found a hedge-hog to chew on!" Three hours before his death, Luther called for pen and paper, and wrote the following Latin verse:

"Pestis eram vivens, moriens ero mors tua, Papa!"

The hexameter may be "done into English" in this fashion:

O Pope, I was thy pest to my last breath;
And now, in dying, I shall be thy death.

THE BOSTON ALMANAC FOR 1849.—This most useful of all books with unpretending titles, was placed in our hands on the day of its author's burial. This little annual, as full of condensed information as if it had been forced in by one of his own tremendous hydraulic presses, may serve at once as his monument, and as an image of his full mind. Mr. Dickinson, as appears by his "last dying speech and confession," here given, expired as a martyr to the passion for doing business. Few men have done so much, or so well. He seemed to feel, as Lord Bacon did, "that every man is a debtor to his profession;" and made unwearied exertion to improve the noble art of Printing. His efforts were highly successful, and will not die with him. His empire is divided into two great kingdoms. The "Dickinson Printing House" is gone into the hands of Damrell and Moore; and the "Dickinson Type Foundry" is removed to Andover by W. H. Wardwell. These establishments will lose none of their high reputation, under their present management, and will long perpetuate the memory of him who spent his life in bringing them to their present perfection.

MONTHLY RECORD.

The Independent.—This new Congregational paper has appeared at New York; and, like the Irish rebellion in the time of Charles I., "it breaks out forty thousand strong." The only disadvantage under which it labors, is the highly raised expectation of the public, which will not be easily satisfied. And the editors do not wish to afford easy satisfaction. They are men, as the Rev. Sydney Smith used to say, "of forty-parson power!"

Digitized by Google

Harvard College. — The resignation of Mr. Everett, as President of our ancient university, has been received with lamentation. Perhaps no man not professedly orthodox, ever enjoyed more of the confidence of the orthodox community. His urbanity of manners, his accomplished scholarship, his serious and self-sacrificing spirit, together with the impartiality of his administration, have endeared his name to all the friends of the institution which he has so greatly adorned. Whatever may be alleged against the sectarianism of the college, we believe no man will attempt to inculpate Mr. Everett with this charge. We regret that ill health, aggravated by the severe labors of his office, should have made his resignation necessary; and we sincerely hope that so much wisdom and moral worth will not be lost to the community, but constrained to accept some less burdensome but no less important situation, in our public councils. — Where can the corporation find a suitable successor? We fear that it will be difficult for them to obtain a man who will give general satisfaction. Among the names mentioned, as candidates for the vacancy, are Messrs. Choate, Sparks, and Giles, Drs. Walker and Wayland, and Prof. Felton. Let a man of an enlarged spirit, of whatever denomination, who, like Mr. Everett, would administer the affairs of the college for the public good, without regard to sect, be placed at the head of the institution; let the Hollis Professorship be filled according to the statutes of the founder; let the Unitarians support their own divinity school, disconnected from the college, as the orthodox and Baptists support theirs; and let there be a more liberal spirit manifested in filling the vacancies which may occur from time to time in the board of overseers; and the university would at once receive an impulse of prosperity, such as tens of thousands by way of endowments in its present condition, can never give it.

Ordination at Worcester. — The ordination of Rev. Mr. Bushnell, over the fourth orthodox Church in this thriving city, was attended by some diversity of sentiment. Exceptions were taken at his opinions on several important points of belief; and, after long examination, sixteen members of the Council voted in favor of his ordination, eleven voted against it, and three declined voting. It is impossible, with the slender information we possess as to the facts, to form a clear opinion upon the merits of the case. But as all the influences, local, occasional, and personal, which bear upon a Council in such cases, are in favor of proceeding to ordination; and as the candidate's warmest friends usually constitute a considerable portion of the body, it seems to argue a strong sense of duty and integrity of purpose, on the part of such members as refused to assist in putting him into the ministry. Such a stand for principle, made by men of kind and generous feelings, in circumstances of great delicacy and difficulty, is highly honorable to them, even if their scruples should prove to be unfounded. It is to be presumed that the majority had reasons which were satisfactory to them, for endorsing the soundness of Mr. Bushnell's views as to the Inspiration of the Bible, which is now become among us "the article of a standing, or a falling Church."

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. H. SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

N. B. Competent agents are wanted to circulate this work. A liberal compensation will be given.

J. V. BEANE & CO.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] FEBRUARY, 1849. [No. 2.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.

NO. 21 CORNHILL.

1849.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Millennial Advent of Christ,	49
The Huguenots in New England,	56
Freedom of Inquiry,	60
The Kingship of Christ,	65
Novelty in Religion,	70
Christianity and the Arts,	75
Letter to the Editor of the Christian Review,	86
Observations on Men, Books and Things:	
The Golden Fleece,	90
Memoir of Matthew Henry,	91
Memoir of Rev. Dr. Milner,	92
Bunyan's Pilgrim,	92
Louise Merton,	93
Runaway Girls,	93
Monthly Record,	94

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office nine dollars, shall receive six copies of the Christian Observatory for one year.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863, Sept 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

Vol. III. FEBRUARY, 1849. No. 2.

THE MILLENNIAL ADVENT OF CHRIST.*

THERE are two views as it regards the future destiny of the world, radically opposed to each other. One is some form of what is called the millennarian theory. The other is the view at present adopted by the greater part of the Christian world, and of which Edwards, Bellamy, and Hopkins, may be regarded as prominent advocates. We propose to compare these views, and to consider the interests involved in the discussion, and the present state of the argument between their respective advocates.

The fundamental peculiarity of the common view is, that it maintains the doctrine of the organic regeneration of human society, to be effected by the spiritual coming of Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

In order to understand this statement, we are to consider that there are two ways in which the Holy Spirit operates, in carrying forward the designs of God on earth. In the first place, he operates by individual regeneration, with the design of saving God's elect out of this evil world; whilst the organizations of society, though wrong, are left unaltered. Thus, for centuries after the coming of Christ, the great organizations of the iron empire of Rome remained unaltered by Christianity; and yet, meantime, God was regenerating and saving his elect through all the provinces of that vast empire. Still, however, Christianity,

* The Literalist. Three volumes. Philadelphia. 1840. — The Theological and Literary Review. By David N. Lord. New York.

Digitized by Google

like a leaven, was pervading the world, and preparing finally to exert a regenerating power upon all the civil, and social organizations, not only of Rome, but of the human race. And as this leaven pervades the masses of human society, the Holy Spirit enters upon his second great work; and that is to reorganize human society, removing all corruptions and abuses, and bringing it into full accordance with the law of God.

This latter work of the Holy Spirit has been, for ages, but partially executed. Christianity has, indeed, penetrated like leaven, and has seemed, at times, to be on the point of overthrowing the empire of Satan. Such seemed to be the anticipations of Eusebius, when paganism fell before it, and Constantine extended his imperial patronage to the Church. But, by intermixtures of worldliness and error, more compact systems of antichristian tendency were soon formed, of portentous splendor, from the evil influences of which the world has not recovered to this day.

Since the Reformation, the true theory of political and ecclesiastical organization, has been studied with an interest increasing in extent and intensity. Moreover, many great experiments in religious and civil organization, especially our own, have thrown their light upon the excited minds of the nations. Nevertheless, Satan has resisted, inch by inch, the onward movements of God. He has ever endeavored to push freedom and reform to ruinous excesses; and then, by the consequent reaction, to throw the world back upon a fixed conservatism of evil.

Now the common theory of the church is, that all these efforts of Satan shall be rendered vain by intellectual and moral influences only. The moral power of the Holy Spirit, like fire, shall penetrate and dissolve all systems of error, and, from the chaos, call forth a regenerate system, sacred and sublime; a new moral creation, a new heavens and a new earth, destined to eclipse the first, which, glorious though they were, shall not be remembered nor come into mind.

This result, then, is to be effected by an invisible, powerful, and all-pervading agency of God on human society. This agency produces effects varying according to what it meets. If it meets organized opposition, it agitates, dissolves, and consumes like fire. If it meets hearts prepared to yield, it harmonizes and unites them around God. No rank is too high, no combination too powerful, to be effected by this influence. Kings and emperors

Digitized by Google

fall before it: systems of religion, governments of all kinds, all social organizations and compacts, all that earth or hell can invent or frame together, and consolidate by time, or prejudice, or interest, or force, God can and will dissolve.

So far as reorganizing is concerned, God acts through individuals, manifesting himself to them with a fulness and clearness according to the work to be done. By producing deep conviction of sin, and self-loathing, he eradicates unholy ambition, and longings after human praise. He increases the power of holy emotions, of a pure, gentle, and spiritual kind; and gives increasing delight in God, and a desire to know and to do his will. He enlarges their views above all that is finite, temporary, and local; and causes them to see the real system as it is, and thus to arrive at such unity of views and action, that they can perfect the great work of ecclesiastical organization. Thus is the Church made one. Thus is it given to her to put on fine linen, clean and white. Thus is she prepared for the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

When the church is thus divorced from all unholy alliances, and made pure, united, and free, all other forms of false organization will soon be dissolved, and the organic regeneration of human society be complete. These results are to be effected without any interruption of those great intellectual and moral laws now in operation; and without any visible appearance of Christ. The moral forces now in existence are to receive vast accessions of power; but there is to be no interposition of God, new in kind.

We think that our original statement will now be fully understood; namely, that the fundamental peculiarity of the common view is, that the organic regeneration of human society is to be effected by a purely spiritual coming of Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

The fundamental peculiarity of the other system is, that it denies the organic regeneration of the world anterior to the personal coming of Jesus Christ. It agrees with the first view, in teaching that God, from age to age, regenerates individuals, and thus takes out an elect from among the false and sinful organizations of society. It differs from it, in denying that the moral means now in operation will ever avail to regenerate the corrupt organizations of human society, and introduce the Millennium. On the other hand, the power of Satan shall continue to be exerted through such organizations with even augmented energy;

Digitized by Google

and things shall wax worse and worse, till a great crisis comes, in which nothing can save the Church but the personal revelation of the Son of God, to defeat his enemies, and to establish his own kingdom on earth.

The great ends of the existing dispensation, on this view, are to manifest the character and rights of God as a ruler, and the depravity of man, so that the way may be prepared to appreciate the favors of God, under the visible reign of the Messiah; and also to take out of the world the elect of God, and to fit them for their reign on earth with Christ. Those of the elect who are dead, are to be raised at the coming of Christ, and this is the first resurrection. Those of the elect who are alive at his coming, are to be changed; and both united, are to reign with him over the world, during the Millennium. The rest of the dead, or the wicked, rise not till the last resurrection, at the close of this period.

During this millennial reign, therefore, the inhabitants of this world will be of two kinds, — the children of the resurrection in their spiritual bodies, who neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God. These are to form a heavenly hierarchy under Christ, their head, and to reign with him as kings and priests over the nations of the earth. The other kind of inhabitants will be the nations of the earth, organized as at present, under separate governments, over which Christ and the risen saints will preside.

Among these, a peculiar preëminence will be assigned to the Jews, who, being converted, shall again possess the land of their fathers, and be a praise and a glory among the nations of the earth. As to the more minute details of this system, its advocates differ among themselves.

But those who are most anxious not to degrade the spirituality of Christ and the saints, as the Honorable G. T. Noel, do not limit the abode of Christ and the saints to the surface of the earth. "The scene presented," says he, "to the eye of the servant of Elisha, may recur to the mind in illustration of this idea. He beheld, in the regions of the air, chariots and horses of fire." He suggests that they may dwell in the air when Satan and his hosts are expelled; and, as occasion may require, descend, visibly or invisibly, to promote the ends of their reign. The earth, moreover, is to be renovated and beautified in honor of the Messiah's reign and victory.

Digitized by Google

Nor do they limit the reigning saints to this world. "May not," says Noel, "the glorified saints range with happy eagerness, through unnumbered regions of tranquillity and joy? (John, xiv: 2, 3; I. Thess., iv: 17,) and amidst heavenly dominions, and societies of which they now can form no definite conceptions, receive continual accessions of knowledge and felicity?"

It is needless to say that these views, if true, are of vast moment. This will be, in the highest sense, the establishment of an entirely new dispensation. It will involve, of necessity, the opening of a new series of revelations to the human race. By them, not only will all existing controversies be definitively settled, but new disclosures, of higher truth, will constantly be made. There will, therefore, be not only what the Romish Church now professes to be, an infallible interpreter of God's word, and judge of controversies, but a present incarnate God, to reveal new truth, as he of old revealed it when on earth.

This, of necessity, will make a material difference in the relations of the Bible to the world. Of this the advocates of these views seem to be aware, and the Rev. J. W. Brooks has fully avowed it. He states that, if even the common views as to the millennium were fully carried out, the Holy Scriptures would, in part, be rendered inapplicable to the then existing condition of men in the flesh, and that there would be need of some farther revelation of God. For instance, those parts which relate to Satan, persecution, and days of mourning, would be superseded. Satan will be bound, persecution cease, and the Church be prosperous. So the representations of the Church as a little flock, and of the whole world as lying in wickedness, would no longer be true. The same may be said of those passages which represent the Church as mixed, — a field of mingled wheat and tares. He anticipates revelations so full, that the Scriptures will be superseded. "Nor will the Scriptures, *superseded in the Millennium*, be devoid of interest or use, but they will serve, in the way of retrospect and memorial; excepting some very few passages, respecting the little season when Satan shall be loosed, and the events which are to follow." In favor of these views, they argue from two sources, philosophy and Scripture.

Rev. Henry Woodward is the only person who, so far as we recollect, has handled the philosophical argument. He endeavors to shew, that something is needed to fill the great vacuum which

Digitized by Google

will be made when Popery shall be removed; that no church nor system now on earth is fit to do it; that things do not seem to be tending to prepare any such system; and that the human mind needs, in order to perfect society on earth, and fully to develop its own powers, what nothing can supply but such a coming of Christ. Men need what Rome offers. They need an infallible judge. "The high claims of the Romish Church have always appeared to me, not so much absurd in theory, as false in point of fact. That Church is a dark shadow, or rather an actual counterpart or antithesis of the real body of Christ. Hence her power. She is a counterfeit of the real kingdom of Christ, and will keep her power till he comes to fill the void created by her fall."

He argues, too, that this view is better adapted to satisfy a sceptical mind, as to the Bible, or even natural religion; as more perfectly harmonizing the Bible, and meeting a strong want of supernatural interposition. Such are the opposing views. Let us look at the present state of the last.

We shall, for the present, pass over the developments of the Millennarian views in the early Church, and those which coincided with or followed the Reformation; and notice those which synchronize with the present efforts to convert the world. The Millennarians of Great Britain have taken the lead, and written numerous treatises to defend their views. In the year 1840, the writings of the most prominent among them were republished at Philadelphia, in a series of volumes, entitled "The Literalist." Since then, Dr. Duffield, Dr. Henshaw, and others, have promulgated similar views; and still more recently, the Rev. David N. Lord has established a quarterly magazine, in which he is advocating, substantially, the same theory. He denies the organic regeneration of human society as the result of the present efforts to convert the world; and insists that Christ's kingdom cannot be established on earth, till he shall come in person to defeat his foes. His theory is this: "Christ is, within a brief period, to come from heaven in person, and visibly; raise the sanctified who shall have died, and judge and accept those who are living; destroy the civil and ecclesiastical powers who usurp his rights and persecute his people, and renewing the nations that survive, reign over them with his glorified saints through a long round of ages."

He holds up the Church and the ministry as involved in deep error on this subject; — not merely error of theory, but, as he

Digitized by Google

asserts, in many cases, error of the heart. He thinks, however, that a disposition to investigate the subject is on the increase, and remarks: "This disposition has been strengthened by the views we have propounded of the principles of symbolization; and a considerable number having become convinced that they are revealed in the Scriptures and obligatory, are applying them." As the result, he anticipates the formation of "a large body, embracing persons of the highest rank, in intellect, learning, and piety," who will adopt and promulgate views similar to his own.

He also adds, "that those generally, who are engaged in the conduct and support of missions and other agencies for the conversion of man, are acting on mistaken notions, both of God's purposes and of their instrumentality, and will be disappointed."

From the brief statement which we have given of these opposing views, it is obvious that great interests are involved in the discussion. The theory of Millennarianism has never as yet originated and sustained a rational system of benevolent enterprise, like the present. It has, on the other hand, been held in connection with great extravagancies, and the minds of some of its advocates have been unbalanced, if not quite deranged, by its influences. Moreover, there is no evidence that a system of benevolent enterprise, like the present, could be sustained if it were to become prevalent, and there is reason to believe that it could not.

On the other hand, the common view tends to stimulate and sustain Christian enterprise, by the high motives of an assured hope of success. It does not turn away the mind from a study of the laws of social progress, and from the use of wisely adapted means, to anticipations of a supernatural revelation of Christ, and an entire change of dispensation. It does not unsettle the mind, and tend to extravagancies. But, under its influence, primitive energy, liberality, and self-denial have been manifested in the efforts for the conversion of the world.

All efforts, then, to revolutionize the public mind on this subject, deserve a careful scrutiny. Let no Christian hastily yield himself to those views, which may, if prevalent, overthrow all the benevolent enterprises that we have, and give us nothing of any value in their place.

We propose hereafter to make some remarks on the principles and modes of reasoning employed by the advocates of the Millennarian system.

Digitized by Google

THE HUGUENOTS IN NEW ENGLAND.

In a recent Boston newspaper, we noticed an account of the death of Mrs. Mary Sigourney Le Mercier, widow of the late Pierre Le Mercier of St. Malo, France, at the age of ninety. We are not certain that this lady and her husband were descendants of those Huguenot refugees of the same names, who found an asylum in Massachusetts, during the time of persecution in France. Be this as it may, the incident alluded to has recalled a passage in the early ecclesiastical history of New England, which, although of less interest than many others belonging to that period, deserves to be kept in remembrance, if for no other purpose, as an illustration of the generous hospitality with which the Puritans of New England received all who came among them in order to enjoy the civil and religious liberty which they were denied in other lands.

While our Fathers, driven from their native country by the cruel oppression of the secularized Church of England, had found a refuge, and were laying the foundations of a free Christian commonwealth on these shores, the Protestants of France, of the same faith, were suffering a persecution, unparalleled in its severity, from the apostate church of Rome, then, and long before, drunk with the blood of the saints, and with furious hatred endeavoring to blot the true Church of Christ from the world. These confessors and martyrs were called *Huguenots*, a name of uncertain origin; but probably, like that of *Puritan*, applied to them by way of reproach. The sufferings which they endured for conscience' sake fill one of the gloomiest and most heart-rending pages of the world's history. On the twenty-second of August, 1572, a day which the souls under the altar remember well, the massacre of Bartholomew commenced; and before its close, more than seventy thousand Protestants, of every age, sex, and rank, were cruelly put to death; — a bloody sacrifice to the Moloch of ecclesiastical vengeance, for which the Pope ordered a jubilee throughout christendom. The Edict of Nantes, which was passed by Henry IV., in 1598, gave these persecuted people a season of rest; and secured them in the public profession and practice of the religion which was so dear to their hearts. But the revocation of it, by Louis XIV., in 1685, opened again the flood-gates of ruin, and compelled multitudes of them to seek a

Digitized by Google

shelter from renewed persecution, in England, Holland, and other Protestant countries. More than half a million of the best citizens of France, were thus exiled from their native land, and made pilgrims and strangers wherever true religion was suffered to do its work, or enjoy its ordinances, in peace.

Although the government of Massachusetts could afford little or no aid to their suffering brethren abroad, it was able, and ever ready, to furnish an asylum here to all who were compelled, like themselves, to seek in this wilderness a place of personal safety, and of civil and religious freedom. The Puritans have often been charged with selfishness and illiberality; but upon no point have they been more deeply misrepresented and wronged, than upon this. They were, indeed, unwilling to have their peace disturbed and their whole undertaking endangered, by vagabonds, without religion or conscience, who, having "left their country for their country's good," came here to disseminate their revolutionary and disorganizing principles; and some stringent, but salutary laws were passed, in order to protect the infant colony from such nuisances. But toward all the oppressed and afflicted, of every name, denomination, and country, who fled to them for protection, and had the grace to refrain from injuring their best benefactors, our Fathers, poor and oppressed as they themselves were, manifested a liberality seldom equalled, and never surpassed by any community. And their charity, rejoicing in every opportunity of doing good, was expressed in their laws, as well as in their individual benevolence. In a statute passed in 1641, they say: "If any strangers or people of other nations, professing the true Christian religion, shall fly to us from the tyranny of oppression of their persecutors, or from famine, or the like necessary and compulsory cause, they shall be entertained and received amongst us according to that power and prudence God shall give us."

Not many years elapsed before our Fathers were furnished with an opportunity to prove, by the practical exhibition of a Christian hospitality, the sincerity of their profession. As early as 1662, John Toulon, a citizen of Rochelle, where the Huguenots were exposed to peculiar trials, applied to the government of this colony, in behalf of himself and numerous others who were suffering on account of their religion, for permission to transport themselves to Massachusetts for safety; a request which was

Digitized by Google

readily granted. Of this permission, however, the petitioners did not avail themselves until about twenty years afterward. In 1682, the Assembly of the clergy of France issued what they styled, "A warning to the pretended reformed," — for so they characterized the Huguenots, — to return without delay to the bosom and to the fellowship of the Roman Catholic Church, upon pain of her hot displeasure. The danger and sufferings of the Protestants throughout France, were, from that time great, and admitted of no remedy or delay. From a letter written by an inhabitant of Rochelle to some friend in Massachusetts, it appears that the Christians in that city were exposed to intolerable hardships. They were robbed of their goods, their places of worship were destroyed, their ministers were banished from the country, their property was confiscated, ruinous fines were imposed upon them, they were not allowed to become masters or employers in any trade or business, they had soldiers arbitrarily and unnecessarily quartered upon them, their children were taken from them; in short, every possible means of wearing out the faith and patience of the saints, was resorted to by a power that feared not God, and felt no pity for man. In this letter, the unknown writer states that New England was in such repute and estimation among the Protestants of France, that many of his brethren were desirous of finding an asylum here; and suggests that it would be a profitable undertaking for any one to despatch a ship, for the purpose of bringing over those who were anxious to come.

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in the following year, left the Huguenots nothing to hope for, and everything to fear in France. One of the articles of this infamous act prohibited all persons belonging to the "pretended reformed religion," from transporting themselves, their wives, children or property, from the kingdom; on pain, for the men so offending, of being condemned to the galleys, and of confiscation of person and goods for the women. In order to meet this exigency, and to furnish a quiet home for these afflicted servants of Christ, the General Court of Massachusetts, in 1682, granted to Joseph Dudley, William Stoughton, Robert Thompson, and their associates, a large tract of land, now known by the name of Oxford, in the county of Worcester. It was eight miles square, and well adapted to the wants of the Huguenots, many of whom were cultivators of the soil. In 1686, the proprietors brought over thirty French

Digitized by Google

Protestant families, and settled them upon the eastern portion of this tract, where about twelve thousand acres of land were surveyed, and set apart for their exclusive use. The united body of settlers continued for ten years, at least, upon the plantation, where they erected fortifications, built a grist and malt mill, planted vineyards and orchards, and acquired the right to send a representative to the general court. Of their ecclesiastical organization while at Oxford, we find no account in the history of those times. It appears, however, that they enjoyed the ministrations of Mr. Bondet, a French Protestant divine, during their existence as a colony; for there is in the Secretary's office at Boston, a letter, signed "D. Bondet, minister of the Gospel in a French congregation at New Oxford," complaining to the government of the sale of intoxicating liquors to the Indians in that vicinity, and describing the baneful effects which this unrestrained traffic produced upon those unfortunate people. The government probably adopted measures for the removal of this evil. This representation may have induced them to assign him a missionary service among the Indians in that neighborhood; for in 1695, we find him preaching to the Nipmuks, in the southern part of Worcester County.

The place of the meeting-house, and of the burial-ground about it, or in its immediate vicinity, belonging to these colonists, was discovered, after considerable effort, in 1826. It was found to lie within the lands of Captain Humphrey, of Oxford, near the foot of Mayo's hill, so called, on the summit of which stood the principal fortification, where some remains of it are, or were, a few years since, still to be seen.*

The continuance of the settlement at Oxford can be clearly traced down to the year 1696, when it was broken up and completely destroyed by the Indians. Upon their dispersion, many, if not the great majority, of the colonists, removed to Boston. Here they found a place of worship belonging to a small society of their Huguenot brethren, of the same faith and order, in which they for many years unitedly attended upon divine service, and enjoyed the peaceful exercise of the religion for which they had

* For this statement we are indebted to the late Dr. Holmes of Cambridge; who, many years ago, obtained from a Mr. Sigourney, a descendant of one of the first immigrant families then living in Oxford, the results of his investigations, for an ecclesiastical history of New England, which, although prepared for the press, has never been published.

Digitized by Google

endured so many toils and sacrifices. The Rev. Peter Daillé, a man highly esteemed, and a faithful preacher, was their first pastor. He was succeeded by Rev. Andrew Le Mercier, who is described as a very worthy and useful minister. He was the author of the Church History of Geneva, — a book of some repute in its day, — and also of a Political and Geographical Account of that Republic, printed at Boston in 1732. By intermarriages and other means, it appears that even during the life of Mr. Le Mercier, the French families became so blended with the other families in Boston, that separate and distinct religious services became either unnecessary or impracticable; for we are told that their place of worship was for some years unoccupied, and was finally sold for the use of a new Congregational church. Very few of the Huguenot families ever afterwards returned to Oxford. Several original French names were, until a few years past, and may perhaps still be, found there, among which was that of Sigourney, probably the maiden name of Mrs. Le Mercier, to whose recent death we have alluded. In 1718, the lands which had been occupied by the Huguenots at Oxford, were granted anew; and in 1715, the village was re-settled by thirty Puritan families, from within the Province of Massachusetts.

FREEDOM OF INQUIRY.

"I AM verily persuaded," says Robinson, to the little band of pious adventurers who were leaving his flock at Leyden, "I am verily persuaded that the Lord has more truth yet to break forth out of his holy Word." "But I must, herewithal, exhort you to take heed what you receive as truth. Examine it, consider it, and compare it with the Scriptures of truth, before you receive it." Here is the germ of that civil and religious liberty which have marked the history, and characterized the people, of New England. It lies at the foundation, as the chief corner-stone of all our free institutions. It distinguishes our ecclesiastical polity from the Romanism of Rome, and from the semi-Romanism of Canterbury. Here the right of private judgment is invested with the obligations of earnest religious inquiry. Liberty of con-

Digitized by Google

science is seen to be not only intrinsically excellent, but also safe and useful, from the happy alliance into which it is brought with the infallible Divine Word. The spirit of free inquiry is both excited and directed. Here are expectancy and caution. The expectancy is not of a new revelation, but of new applications of truth to the rights of conscience, to the discipline of the Church, and to practical duties. And the caution is just such as contributes to that balance between extremes, so essential to the permanency and greatest advantage of mental and civil freedom. It is caution against mistaking freedom for faith, — the means for the end; against erecting altars to the goddess of Liberty, and paying that homage to her at the threshold of the temple of Christianity which is due only to the sovereign Divinity residing within. "*Examine it, consider it, and compare it with the Scriptures of truth, before you receive it*," are words worthy of being engraven, like the "Know thyself" of the ancients, upon the door of every Christian temple, every hall of science, and every school of theology.

In respect to the *subject-matter* of free inquiry, whatever in nature lies within the compass of human observation, may be sought after and examined. The whole field of created objects is thrown wide open to the inquisitive, for their inspection and scrutiny. The earth invites inquiry into her richest treasures, and her most hidden laws. Every force may be analyzed, every metal cast into the crucible, and every substance decomposed. The canopy of celestial luminaries, yields itself up to the magic scales and measures of the natural philosopher. No science has any secrets which may not be penetrated, — any holy of holies, accessible only to a consecrated priesthood. Nature has no mystical teachings permitted only to the initiated. Her vast book may be reverently opened by all, and its ten thousand illuminated leaves turned over and subjected, some to the minutest microscopic, and others to the most far-reaching telescopic, examinations. He who has the power to interrogate her, has, by divine right, the liberty. For all such, she has no dumb oracles.

It is, in part, owing to this greater liberty of inquiry, that the later generations have been characterized by more valuable discoveries in the natural sciences, than were those that preceded them. There were men in those times, whom it is not befitting in us to speak of as dolts, because we are free from the bewildering

Digitized by Google

influence of alchemy and astrology, and have more knowledge than they possessed, of the magnet and the solar system, of the power of steam and the telegraph. These were men, whom we cannot modestly stigmatize as dwarfs, because, standing on their shoulders, we can see further than they saw. The boundaries of science are not now fixed, as then, by ecclesiastical enactment, to be extended only by a written permit from a junto of inquisitorial conspirators against free thought and free speech. The earth is not now, as then, required by canon law, to remain stationary, and the sun commanded to revolve around it, by a bench of stupid cardinals, as when Copernicus was condemned, and Galileo imprisoned, for thinking and teaching otherwise. It is to the greater liberty of inquiry and of instruction, that our greater advancement is to be ascribed, much more than to any superiority of the men of our age over the men of past ages. It is to liberty that we owe it, which, says John Milton, "is the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarified and enlightened our spirits like the influence of heaven, which hath enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up our apprehensions, degrees above themselves." Therefore, he says, "give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely, according to conscience, which is above all liberties."

From this liberty of inquiry, so visibly inscribed on the portals of every department of natural science, we are led to expect the same when we enter the province of morals and religion. And in this we are not disappointed. Any humble adventurer into any part of the sacred domain, offers sufficient vindication from the charge of intrusion, when he says to his censor: "I search the Scriptures," — "I prove all things."

Whatever comes within the sphere of Christian doctrine or of political or moral duty, is legitimate subject of free inquiry. There are no religious dogmas, no settled ethical opinions, no established political creeds, and no conventional usages, of such venerable antiquity, or reputed sanctity, that they may not be considerately approached, examined, and tested, by a judicious and discriminating Christian philosophy. No man or body of men, either in Church or State, has any right to say of such general principles or practices, that they are too difficult, or too sacred, or, that there are too many interests at stake, to allow of their being questioned. If some men incorporate into their creeds question-

Digitized by Google

able doctrines, they have no reason to complain, if other men call them in question. If the doctrines are sound, discussion will only make their soundness more apparent, and give them greater efficiency, by removing from their solid foundation in truth the rubbish which may have occasioned them to be suspected. If, on the other hand, they are false and pernicious, no reverence for their antiquity, or regard for the assumed interests of the few against the many, ought to shield them from exposure and reprehension. Charles I. declared the doctrine of predestination to be "too big for the people," and therefore that it must not be preached. The real difficulty was, that, as involving the sovereignty of God and the rights of conscience, it was too big for the monstrous prerogative of the king, and for his arrogant assumptions of spiritual power to lord it over God's heritage.

The right to inquire after truth, is inherent in the human mind. It is the guarantee, as truth is the element, of its freedom. "The truth shall make you free!" It is an inalienable right. No man can divest himself of it. No man can be divested of it. It is the gift of God to him, the original endowment of his immortal nature. That its use may be subject to circumstantial limitations, we deny not. But, as there is no man or class of men from whom it is derived, so there is none to whom it may be surrendered. In this, all are equal; and in this, all are equally bound to "stand fast in the liberty" wherewith they are made free. Despots may league together for its extinction, but they cannot destroy it. Crowned heads may combine, in so-called "Holy Alliance," to crush out the vital spark, which "cannot, but by annihilating, die;" but they combine in vain. Repressed and smothered for a time, it may be; as it has been, by the bandages of ancient vassalage, and as it now is in the caves of Islamism and the Tartarean abode of the man of sin. Its suppression is the only means of inducing a general imbecility from which can be extorted that servile homage, which is the only security for usurped power, the only prop for despotism.

But the day of deliverance, foretold by the prophets, seems to have come, when fugitive oppressors, shaken from their crumbling thrones, begin to hide themselves from the avenger. Like the owl and the bat, they haste to the clefts of the rocks, to hide from the light which betokens the advance of free thoughts and free speech. The condition of the larger part of continental Europe, at

Digitized by Google

this moment, is our proof and our illustration. In the half-suppressed whisperings of discontent, stealthily breathed out against an oppressive absolutism in Spain and Russia; in the divine retribution upon tyranny and spiritual usurpation just witnessed at Vienna and at Rome; in the sudden upheavings of wrath under the complicated fabric of despotism artfully superinduced upon the French people by Louis Phillippe, there is clearly visible the up-rising of long cramped and down-trodden, but indignant humanity. The contest is mainly a moral contest, in which free mind is seen mocking in its sovereignty, the pride and trappings of royalty, and bidding defiance to the prowess of armies and of navies. It is a gallant struggle of free thought for the rescue of her younger sister, free speech, from a long and disgraceful bondage. It is a struggle, in which oppressors and despots are awe-stricken by the sudden boldness of the belligerents, and the sublimity of their position. The people are asserting their claim to think for themselves. Their right to do so, they demand shall be embodied in constitutional government. This government they insist shall be guaranteed and guarded by a free press, the natural and legitimate sentinel to guard the citadel of liberty. Let them take one step more, and base the whole upon the life-giving power of the Word of God, and bring the movement into agreement with its ordinances, and more fully within the beneficent sweep of divine providence, and they will be free indeed. Divergency from these, leads them into the only gloom that beclouds their prospects, the only region of real danger.

It is no valid objection to the progress of free principles, that it is sometimes attended with political convulsions. These indicate the weight of oppression under which abused humanity has been laboring, as well as the temporary aberration of wise men whom it has made mad. But the "liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely," the want of which occasions such eruptive activity of the public mind, is the only remedy.

Nor is it to be alleged against the moral and political progress consequent upon such mental freedom, that the ancient prerogatives of crowned heads and the time-honored privileges of spiritual despots and their mercenary minions, will be invaded by it. It is only when these are arrayed against the rights of humanity, and are antagonistical to divine providence, that they will receive material detriment from religious and political freedom. And

Digitized by Google

when these are clearly so arrayed and antagonistical, have they been so harmless to the interests of mankind, as to give them claim to entire immunity from the spoliations of the victors? Shall they be held to no indemnification to those whom they have injured and crushed? Must the Mahommedan and Papal, the Pagan and Infidel Antichrist be permitted to insist that the world stop in its search after truth, and that the rays of living light from the gospel, which are gilding the hill-tops of India and China, and are descending into the dark nooks of France, and Germany, and Italy, be turned back and locked up within convent-walls, lest the poor victims of their cupidity, rapacity, and ambition, should escape from their iron grasp? Shall they demand that the world be turned backward in the cycle of ages, to a point of ignorance where oppression would lose its disgrace and terror, because men would lose the light in which it had been revealed, and the sensibility by which it had been felt?

No; this cannot be. Prophecy is against it. The providence and promises of God are against it. History is against it. These all point to a consummation, which none have occasion to dread, but those "kings of the earth who set themselves, and the rulers who take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed." "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision."

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST.

It is hardly necessary to recite many out of that multitude of Scriptures, which speak of Jesus as a king, and ascribe to him an eternal sovereignty and a celestial kingdom. His throne, says the Psalmist, "is forever and ever, and his sceptre is a sceptre of righteousness." "He shall reign," said the angel Gabriel to Christ's virgin-mother, "he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." The church is often spoken of as a body politic, of which Christ is the head, or supreme and ruling member. "And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preëminence." And

Digitized by Google

again it is written with apostolical sublimity, that "the Father of glory," hath "raised Christ from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Believers are declared to be "complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." So great is this king, and so great is the dignity of serving him, that all his subjects are ennobled into monarchs and princes. He rules over no common people. Having crowned and enthroned them every one, they are a "royal nation," a nation of kings; and so he is fitly styled "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

To him the mightiest minds have done the profoundest homage. Unquestionably and incomparably the mightiest mind which has manifested itself in our day, was the emperor Napoleon, who expired, a captive, at St. Helena, in 1821. The illustrious prisoner, who in the days of his triumph had displayed powers so colossal and so various as to seem almost superhuman, during the later years of his confinement in that dreary isle of the ocean, devoted himself very much to the reading of the Bible, and to serious contemplation. There, like the huge cliffs of his imprisoning islet looking down upon their image in the waters which bathe their feet, Napoleon saw his own features reflected from the waves of time, once so stormy, and now so still. He gazed on the bright mirror,

> "As the broad-breasted rock
> Glasses his rugged forehead in the sea."

Here he became an ardent admirer of Christ as King in Zion. Many of his remarkable expressions are recorded even by the pens of his infidel attendants. Thus to Marshal Bertrand he said at different times: "What a proof it is of the divinity of Christ, that, with so absolute an empire, his single aim is the spiritual melioration of individuals, their purity of conscience, their union to the truth, their holiness of soul." "Christ constructs his worship with his own hands, not with stones, but with men. You are amazed at the conquests of Alexander. But here is a conqueror who appropriates to his own advantage, who

Digitized by Google

incorporates with himself, not a nation, but the human race. Wonderful! the human soul with all its faculties becomes blended with the existence of Christ. And how? by a prodigy surpassing all other prodigies, he seeks the love of men, the most difficult thing in the world to obtain; he seeks what a wise man would fain have from a few friends, a father from his children, a wife from her husband, a brother from a brother; in a word, the *heart*. This he seeks, this he absolutely requires, and he gains his object. Hence I infer his divinity. Alexander, Cæsar, Hannibal, Louis XIV., with all their genius, failed here. They conquered the world, and had not a friend." "Christ speaks, and at once generations become his by stricter, closer ties than those of blood, by the most sacred, most indispensable, of all unions. He lights up the flame of a love which consumes self-love, which prevails over every other love. In this wonderful power of his will, we recognize the Word that created the world. The founders of other religions, never conceived of this mystical love, which is the essence of Christianity, and is beautifully called *charity*. Christ's greatest miracle undoubtedly is the reign of charity." At another time, the ex-emperor said to his faithful follower, the Count de Montholon: "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires; but upon what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon *force*. Jesus Christ alone founded his empire upon *love;* and at this hour millions of men would die for him."*

From these striking expressions, it it manifest, that the capacious mind which had held in its grasp the immense political relations of Europe, and the world, and had wielded them as with the arm of destiny, — that capacious mind had fully taken in the grand conception of the kingly office of Christ! Oh, had this glorious conception but entered and occupied his soul at the time when his dominion stretched from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, and from the Vistula to the Channel Seas, how different now would be the lot of the oppressed millions of Europe. They

* These extracts are taken from many others of a similar character, contained in a tract translated from the French, and published by the American Tract Society, under special endorsement by the Rev. Dr. G. de Felice, Professor in the Theological Seminary at Montauban, France. It has been before the public for several years, and its statements, so far as we can learn, have never been controverted.

Digitized by Google

would not be sighing for another "man of destiny," to arise, and hurl the revolutionary masses against the blood-cemented despotisms of Austria and Russia.

But what the illustrious captive learned too late, the Puritans well knew, and faithfully taught. The reign of Christ was what they longed for with irrepressible desire and zeal. "The setting up of Christ's kingdom" was their great errand to these shores. All that the meek ambition of the Pilgrims craved, was "to serve as stepping-stones to others," in this holy and magnificent enterprise.

"Those daring men, those gentle wives, say, wherefore do they come?
Why rend they all the tender ties of kindred and of home?
'Tis Heaven assigns their noble work, man's spirit to unbind;
They come not for themselves alone, — they come for all mankind.
And to the empire of the West this glorious boon they bring, —
A Church without a Bishop, and a State without a King!"

It is curious to observe the manner in which the constitution of the State, as established by our forefathers, was affected by that of the Church. They held that the Church must be under the divine government of Christ; administered according to the requirements of revelation, through officers freely chosen by the Church, and acting with the Church's free consent and support. This pious and magnanimous plan they also copied into the government of the commonwealth, where the people were to elect their own governors and magistrates; and these officers were to govern themselves by the principles and instructions of the Bible. God, speaking through his Word, was to be owned as chief law-giver, and supreme Head of their community. The free and democratic town-meeting was patterned upon the free and democratic Church-meeting. The system of the civil state was based upon a system of independent Churches. And so long as that system of independent Churches shall predominate among us, so long will it be impossible to subvert the civil and religious liberties of the people who dwell in this holy land. "Purity preserved in the Church," said John Cotton, "will preserve well-ordered liberty in the people, and both of them establish well-balanced authority in the magistrates. God is the author of all these three," — the Church, the commonwealth, and the magistracy.

Digitized by Google

Our fathers were brought by divine providence into the best condition for striking out the right path of ecclesiastical government. They saw hard times; times of cruel oppression. But, as John Norton said, "the best of the servants of God have lived in the worst of times." God permitted the scourge of persecution to drive them out into this wilderness, that here they might reëstablish the kingly power of Christ over themselves and their posterity. When they landed on these shores, they had no definite views as to the details of Church polity. They were agreed in little more than the determination, that every thing should be squared and regulated by the teachings of the Bible. In a very few years, they settled down into the system of usages, which, for almost two centuries, has contributed so efficiently to the growth, peace and piety of our Churches. Here no antiquated rubbish, no venerated establishments, stood in our fathers' way. There was nothing to be destroyed, plucked down, or cleared off, before they could "rise and build." No frowning cathedral, with its resistless associations; no ancient hierarchy with the habit of undisputed dictation, interfered with their researches. They had no time-honored prejudices and long-standing customs, to cramp the inquiring mind. Amid the pillared forest, and under the dome of heaven, they gave ear to the oracles of God. It was in the wilderness, that the Lord prescribed to the wandering Moses the pattern of the tabernacle. It was in a desolate part of Chaldea, that the true plan of the temple was revealed to the exile Ezekiel. It was in the desert isle of Patmos, that the banished apostle saw the glorious vision of the City of God. And it was amid the primeval solitudes of these hills, that God manifested to the Pilgrims the exact frame and model of a pure and primitive Church.

In this view, it becomes easy to trace the effects of their attachment to Christ's kingship and royalty upon their character and conduct. This invincible attachment gave them an elevation of soul over which no priestly arts, nor despotic violence, could ever gain the ascendency. While they cheerfully rendered unto Cæsar, the things that were Cæsar's, they carefully reserved unto God, the things that were God's. It was impossible to enslave a race of men, who, as Dr. Manton said, would "hear no voice but God's in the conscience, and no doctrine in the Church but Christ's!" Their loyalty to "King Jesus," as a principle of

Digitized by Google

action, gave them that sternness of purpose, and iron tenacity of will, which enabled them to endure such overwhelming afflictions, and to prevail over such tremendous obstacles. Their faithful allegiance to the Mediatorial throne afforded a strength to their piety, and a support to their virtues, which must keep alive their memory to "the last syllable of recorded time."

This fundamental principle of Puritanism is the foundation principle of the kingdom of God on earth, — that kingdom for which the world was made. As Coleridge has eloquently said: "The whole march of nature, from the first impregnation of chaos by the Spirit, converges toward this Kingdom as the final cause of the world." All the interests of morality and religion, all the hopes of human regeneration and salvation, depend upon its prosperity. Jesus is King! To him every knee must bend, and every tongue render homage, ere the world shall be renewed in the beauty of holiness, and its lost paradise be restored.

NOVELTY IN RELIGION.

THE age in which we live has been frequently and justly called an age of progress; and from the rapid advance that has been made in all those sciences which relate to our outward life, the most extravagant expectations are entertained by many, of a corresponding progress in the science and practice of religion. Perhaps there is hardly anything by which our times and our community are more distinctly characterized, than by a passionate craving for new views in religion, and a readiness to welcome any theory respecting God, or man's relations to the universe, which have the stamp of novelty to recommend them. We do not think that this desire to bring the doctrines of the Bible into harmony with the restless and searching spirit of the age, arises from a sincere love of truth, and a willingness to receive and obey the laws of God, however and wherever made known; but rather from a disposition to get rid of the Bible, and to lose sight of the old paths in which the saints of God have walked from the beginning. It is desired that human reason may have the merit of discovering a religion for itself, and the liberty to change its gods

Digitized by Google

as often as passion or caprice may require. And this thirst for novelty, not truth, — this desire of freedom from old obligations, not of progress in holiness and divine knowledge, — is met by a host of teachers ever ready to prophecy smooth things to them whose itching ears cannot endure sound doctrine. The pulpit, the press, and the lyceum, are continually announcing some new discovery in religion, in morals, or in the philosophy of life; and the young, especially, are in imminent danger of being fatally misled by the confident tone in which the old religion of their fathers is condemned and ridiculed.

We wish, however, at the very outset, to discriminate clearly between that craving for novelty referred to above, and that natural thirst for knowledge which excites men to investigate every subject of interest to them as natural and immortal creatures, and to use all means and opportunities of increasing their stock of true knowledge. "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." The mind was made to inquire for, and to find pleasure in, the discovery of truth. It is not the aim of religion to extinguish this thirst for knowledge, or to make the soul indolently satisfied with any present attainment. It fears no kind or degree of mental activity which is directed to legitimate objects of investigation, and seeks by proper means to enlarge the boundaries of science. On the contrary, it rejoices in every victory which the mind obtains over the dark powers of ignorance and superstition. It accepts and blesses every discovery of the astronomer, the geologist, the chemist, and the philosopher; and standing in the chief places of concourse, exhorts all men to incline their ear unto wisdom, to cry after knowledge, to lift up their voice for understanding, to seek for wisdom as for silver, and to search for it as for hid treasures. God himself, through the intellectual and moral powers he has given us, and through his providence, which every day furnishes new means of investigation, is continually inviting us to the diligent study of those magnificent volumes of revelation and nature which he has opened before us. And all these great subjects which appeal so powerfully to our curiosity, and our sense of ignorance, when studied in a right frame of mind, and with reference to the practical duties which demand our chief care, will reward our labors with fresh views of truth, and with ever-increasing fruit for the mind and the heart.

Digitized by Google

But the state of mind which we speak of in this article, is entirely different from a common and innocent desire for knowledge, in its nature, in its origin, and in its influence upon the character and life. It is not the love of truth and duty. It is not an earnest wish to discover that which is essential to the proper development of the affections. It is not the delight of an inquiring soul holding fellowship with nature and with God. It is a restless passion, ever clamorous for that which is new, merely because it is new; and weary of everything old, merely because it is old. These lovers of novelty find gratification, not in discovery, but in change, — not in the addition of a useful planet to our system, but in the wonder which its fresh light awakens; and for every new luminary thus discovered, they would have an old one quenched. They have no taste for the pleasure which results from the quiet performance of known duty, from the thorough study and application of useful science, from the contemplation of their own mysterious nature and immortal destiny, and from an earnest and effectual preparation for the tribunal before which they must soon stand. Weary of the old world of thought, with its familiar sun, and ever-varying landscapes, and exhaustless beauty, they desire a new one to awaken feeling in their torpid hearts. Tired of hearing perpetually of that God, who of old laid the foundations of the earth, and hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness; they long to hear some "setter forth of strange gods." Disgusted with the Bible and the gospel of yesterday, they demand a gospel of to-day, and a revelation that shall be made through perverted and unsanctified mind in successive instalments till the end of time. They are never happier than when agitated by some unprecedented absurdity, which they have neither the patience to examine, nor the ability to comprehend. They live in a scene of useless agitation, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. They ask for novelty as the drunkard for intoxicating drink, that they may forget themselves, the truth, and God, in the dreams of a heated imagination.

Their notion of progress consists in renouncing all that has been obtained by laborious investigation, to seize upon some questionable invention. According to this we are ever to be new beginners, raw and green. The scientific idea of progress is to adhere to the established basis of ascertained truth, and to be

Digitized by Google

continually enlarging the boundaries of what is already secured. This can be done only by following the old rule, "to keep what you have, and get what you can."

But it may be said that this state of mind is at least innocent, if it is not commendable. It may, perhaps, seem so to those who have not made it the subject of much reflection; but it is certain that they are mistaken. For surely no passion or affection of the mind which is not under the control of the Divine law, — which wanders restlessly about, or stands idle in the market-place, waiting for some new gratification that can be obtained without the price of labor, — which is applied to no useful purpose, and produces no valuable results, — can be altogether innocent. But it is, in truth, worse than it at first seems. It is not merely negatively sinful, it is a positive evil, and produces unspeakable mischief in the Church and in the world. When the desire for perpetual change in religion has become the ruling passion, it places a man in a false relation to everything within and without. It gives a wrong direction and character to the thoughts. It hinders self-examination, self-knowledge, and self-culture. It interrupts the proper business of religion. It produces uncertainty and instability of moral character, and leaves the soul without strength or consolation amidst the contradictions of the world, the sudden changes of this stormy life, and the struggles of the last hour. It turns the church into a debating society; and makes the intercourse of those who should be of the same mind and judgment, painful and unedifying. It exerts a fatal influence upon personal piety, and upon all the relations of life. It fills the church and the state with idle, ignorant, gossipping, and noisy declaimers, who desire to be teachers of the law, while they understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. Under the influence of such a principle, a man's religion can have no foundation nor symmetry, his graces no root, his hopes no sanction, his professions no sincerity, his religious character no value. He loses the substance of truth in his vain pursuit of shadows. He profanes the temple of God by his unhallowed curiosity; and makes a Christian profession contemptible by his foolish inconsistency. What, then, is the moral character of a state of mind which produces all these dreadful results?

May all our readers be delivered from this evil principle, — this weakness, not of the flesh, but of the spirit, — this source of

Digitized by Google

failure in duty, of feebleness in the hour of trial, of cowardice and terror in death. And to fortify themselves against all temptations to cherish this spirit, let them remember, that although in art, in science, in practical life, new and important truths may be brought to light from day to day; yet in religion, everything of highest value to man is old, and that novelty is a presumptive evidence of falsehood. The Locrians entertained such a dread of change, that every one who proposed a new law was compelled to do so with a halter about his neck, that if his proposition were rejected, he might be immediately hung. If such a custom could enforced among us, there would be fewer novelties in the science of religion! What we want with respect to the Bible, which is the source of all our religious knowledge, is, as John Norton once said, not "new *light*, but new *sight*," — not additional revelations, but a clearer and deeper knowledge of the written Word, — not the learned speculations of uninspired men, but a better understanding of the testimony of the first witnesses, whom God sent forth with miraculous powers to spread his Word among the nations. How many old and salutary truths, beautiful as the stars, and enduring as eternity, invite our study and promise high intellectual, as well as spiritual, delight; while we go about with gaping curiosity, asking of all we meet: "Who will shew us any good?" It is one of the devil's masterpieces and chief deceiving tricks, says Luther, to draw us away from the Bible, and to make us think that there is anything of greater importance than the hearing, reading, and meditating upon God's Word, wherein all our welfare and salvation, both temporal and eternal, consist. This book contains a wisdom that no man is able fully to comprehend. We must ever remain learners here, for we cannot fathom a single word of God. We have only the first fruits; and when we fancy that all is exhausted, we have scarcely mastered the simplest rudiments of the divine oracles.

Our first care, then, should be to understand as fully as possible the holy and venerable Book of Life; and everything is an impertinence which renders us indifferent to its claims, or forgetful of its teachings. The speculations of learned men may have their value. The views which a high and advancing culture, with the aid of an untrammelled press, is continually spreading before us, may demand a passing notice; but should never be regarded as of sufficient importance to interrupt for a day, our diligent

Digitized by Google

study of God's Word, or to awaken a doubt of the absolute sufficiency of its teaching, for all the moral and spiritual wants of mankind. The religion of the Bible, by which alone we can be rendered happy in this world, or prepared for the world to come, consists, not in new revelations, new doctrines, new theories, — not in ascending up into heaven to bring Christ down, nor in descending into the deep, to bring Christ up from the dead, nor in going across the sea to find something of which our philosophy has never dreamed; — not in searching into those hidden things which God has kept in his own power, — but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; in meek and grateful obedience to the system of doctrine which we have heard from the beginning; in holy love to God, and in justice, faithfulness, and charity to man; in the steady and persevering discharge of the ever-recurring duties of our Christian calling; in patient hope, and in deep communion with the powers of the world to come; in daily preparation for the hour which shall separate us from earth, and reveal the glories and the terrors of the future state. He that has the comforts and the excitements of such a religion, will feel no want of those poor novelties, by which the lovers of pleasure are cheated of truth and peace; nor at last be compelled to exclaim in bitterness of soul: "How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof; and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!"

CHRISTIANITY AND THE ARTS.*

The Protestant Church dispenses with the fine arts in her worship, and even seems to despise them. She has no architecture, no sculpture, no painting. The Roman Church delights to establish this fact, and to expatiate on it; she even affects to be scandalized by it. We are aware, indeed, that she has her reasons for seeking, without the limits of her own community, occasions of scandal, and for searching after the mote which is in our eye. But a great number of Protestants make common cause with her upon the point in question, by maintaining the principle

* Translated from "La Reformation," for the Observatory.

Digitized by Google

that worship ought not to be deprived of any magnificence which art can bestow upon it; and by seeking, in the circumstances of our history, the apologies for our artistic poverty; thus refusing to attribute it to a permanent cause. No one appears to have admitted this to be a peculiar feature of Protestantism, nor to have accepted the challenge of our adversaries. Is it not time, then, that the subject be taken up?

Among all men, and generally in proportion to their intellectual development, we find, besides the five senses which do not distinguish them from the animal races, other senses; or, to speak with more precision, a superior employment of these senses; other faculties, other wants, and particularly that of the beautiful, in several departments. However thick the veil of matter, there are those privileged beings to whom it is not completely impenetrable; and who know how to lift its folds, so far as to enable us to guess what may be beneath. But that is what we mean by art; a manifestation of the spiritual world. In proportion as the sensuous arrangement more faithfully exhibits the outlines of the idea, in proportion as the execution shall more minutely set the thought in relief, so much the more will it approach the beautiful. This sensuous manifestation of the spiritual world will never be to man an adequate representation of its object; for even when the Creator, the Supreme Artist, presents it to us, it is only by meditating on what is disclosed to the eye from a dull mirror, that we discover in his works, his invisible perfections, his eternal power and godhead. Yet this creation has had its existence, in order that we might, in some measure, contemplate God. It is by the study of nature, that the Saviour often guides us, he who knew more perfectly than any other, the work of the Father. The spiritual world has, then, a point of contact with the senses; a side by which it may be seized, and fixed in the world of the visible. God has manifested himself, — God who is spirit; the Word has become flesh, and by this means we have been enabled to contemplate his glory; the fulness of the godhead has dwelt bodily in Jesus Christ.

After having ascended to the contemplation of our adorable and beloved Saviour, may we return, without any transition, to the idea of art? We do so without hesitation, for, in fact, our train of thought is not interrupted by this contemplation; it rather reposes in it, and comes forth from it sanctified. It is from the

Digitized by Google

Christian point of view that we contemplate Art. The manifestation of eternal beauty, we have said, is very imperfect for imperfect men, being exhibited here only in the finite; it will become complete only to glorified man, when he shall know as he is known, — when, out of the flesh, he shall see God as he is. Still, it is, in man's present state, the link which unites the sensible to the spiritual world.

God has revealed himself by language, in the Word; by means of form, in Jesus Christ; and by mechanism, in creation. He has reflected himself, then, in the Word, from eternity; but from the beginning to the end of time, he manifests himself by means of form. To this twofold revelation unite themselves, more or less legitimately, the two great branches of art, the one spiritual, the other formal or material; the first embracing eloquence, poetry, and music; the second including architecture, sculpture, and painting; the members of these two series respectively corresponding to each other. The radical distinction between these two branches is essential to the understanding of Art; and the confounding them is the source of all the current errors on this subject. The first derives its inspirations from a region which lies beyond the sensible world, which controls it, and transcends all its limits; for it to copy, would be to deny itself. The other on the contrary, must confine itself to imitation. As soon as its ideal passes over the boundaries of the sensible world, it lands in deformity and absurdity.

Eloquence, poetry, and music, directly and immediately exalt the thoughts. They are always adapted to Christian worship.

Architecture, sculpture, and painting, arrest and retain the thoughts in the sensible world. They are strangers to Christian worship, for which they furnish no fulcrum, but, on the contrary, a mass to be itself lifted up.

Let us compare in the light of this distinction, music and painting, for example. In music, the execution may be well adapted to the thought, and transmit it in its fulness. In painting, the execution remains always infinitely below the conception; mediocrity alone would dispute this fact, which is the despair of all the great masters. The principle of this difference, is, that in painting we are reduced to imitating. And what do we imitate? A world fallen and corruptible, in which the breath of God alone can preserve life and majesty. Music, on the contrary, does not

Digitized by Google

live by imitation; it appears like a stranger here below; like a heavenly guest, whose very gait betrays a celestial origin. It descends in the midst of us, makes the tour of our hearts, penetrates our souls with its irresistible accents, but in order to raise us to a higher sphere. It cannot borrow the gait of this world, without falling, and wholly debasing itself.

It may be objected, that the point of departure from which it rises to infinite heights, is still, this material creation; and that this world is full of harmonies. But what is the force of this objection? Let Michael Angelo become deaf, and the musician remains complete; but let him become blind, and the painter is dead. Who has not seen a great artist leap for joy at the mere reading of a musical work? Who has not seen him roll out waves of inspiration with a pen? All this, however, you say, proves nothing; for in the case supposed, inspiration is nourished by memory. That is a point to be studied; but let us go on. Who could imagine Raphael or Rubens as born and growing up in a subterranean gallery, living there always without ever having seen the sky, nature, woman, and childhood; and there executing their master-pieces? Nothing, however, can hinder us from representing to ourselves Mozart or Beethoven as conceiving their works, even in the same circumstances. Be this as it may, our position remains sound. Musical power never shews itself in imitation. You may try to reproduce the storm, the battle, the avalanche; but it is not real music that you make. And if these isolated examples be insisted on, we should turn them to the account of our argument, by shewing that if music owes any thing to nature, she owes to it her discords, and never her harmonies; — the discords which add to the eloquence of its pleading for the favor of heaven. You may indeed in one sense, define music as the contrast of the world.

It would be easy, by comparing, in turns, poetry or the interior man, with sculpture or the exterior man, — the eloquence which moves the quickened masses, with architecture which moves the inanimate mass, — to exhibit, if not the contrast, at least the essential differences, between these developments of two distinct elements. It might be contended, that poetry and eloquence must, like music, find their ideal in the spiritual world. Is descriptive poetry, poetry indeed? The eloquence which imitates, is it eloquence at all? Sculpture and architecture have, on the

Digitized by Google

contrary, their types in the sensible world; and borrow them, in turns, from the three kingdoms of nature. All this, we are aware, will be warmly contested, but not from the Christian point of view. Material art pretends, too, to have its own ideal, whose starting-point controls the sensible creation, and controls its own creations, as it denominates them. We cannot be ignorant of this theory, which dates back to Plato's admirable conceptions of God's ideas. But Plato in imagining a type, an ideal for all things, supposed that the world had come from the hands of the Creator such as we now see it. Then, in fact, we might by communion with God, recover this ideal of the sensible world, and realise it in some degree by means of art. But revelation has, from the beginning, annihilated this theory; in its opening pages, it informs us, that the creation is fallen: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake!" Man's empire over matter has been restrained, and cannot be recovered, so long as the creation is not restored to its primitive state. The Christian, the man who renders a true worship, has regained a portion of art, the spiritual part, the ideal of which is first entirely in Christ; then, in a regenerated heart and mind. As to the ideal of the exterior world, it cannot be found now in the actual condition of things, it cannot be recovered; and we can neither transform the external world according to a type which we do not possess, nor abandon this ideal, the absence of which destroys a part of our nature, and which is one of the wants of our nature. "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." The theory we oppose, is unscriptural; we are fully justified in resisting it, having placed ourselves at the Bible point of view, and desiring to consider art only in its relations to worship.

Let us return to the principles laid down. Spiritual art, in its three subdivisions, adapts itself to spiritual worship; and we cannot think that, in our day, the different branches of the Reformed Church have any occasion to envy Roman Catholicism in this respect. The distinction being fully established, we will pursue our examination, with the assurance inspired by a first advantage, and one perhaps unexpected.

We mean to say, that material art is not so directly applicable, so closely allied as spiritual art, to Christian thought. Yet, says the objector, would it not be better to sanctify it, than to banish

Digitized by Google

it entirely from worship, bringing to it in this way that religious sentiment which would develope it usefully? To the pure all things are pure. After all, we live in the world of forms! Yes; but must we in the world of appearances, seek to consecrate form? And who are we, then, that we should assume the high prerogative of consecrating any thing? The heaven and the earth shall pass away, and with them every thing that is but a pale and dead copy of them. Spiritual art makes part of the invisible and eternal things, — things which shall be brought to the consummation of an eternal unity. Let us once more repeat it, for the contrary has been often repeated; Material art belongs to visible and perishable things; it so pertains to them, that you may establish the rule, that the degree of its development in any age or country will measure, in that age or country, the development of pantheistic, sensual, or idolatrous tendencies. If there be a country like England, where these tendencies are not deeply rooted, there this branch of art will not have flourished. If, too, there have been in the very countries where these tendencies have always been manifested, epochs in which they have been more especially reduced to theory, and held in esteem, like the age of Augustus, and that of Leo X., these epochs will always shew the strongest development of the material branches of art in their several forms.

As to the spiritual branch of art, the Bible gives us the most sublime specimens. It is the source of the highest poetry, witness Racine, Milton, and Klopstock. It is the type of the highest eloquence. In a word, it recommends to Christianity, not the worship, but the cultivation, of music, whose charms Christ himself enjoyed, and whose harmonies he consecrated in the midst of his disciples.* As to the material arts, if the Gospel has not condemned them, it has at least repudiated them; if it has never defamed them, it has at least dismissed them by a tacit agreement, and has never maintained an alliance with them. The Holy Scriptures, in forming and cultivating the imagination, warn us against images, against "the lust of the eyes," against the control which matter and form may gain over us; for if we do not master them, they will master us.

* Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark, xiv. 26; I. Cor. xiv. 26; Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 16; James, v. 13.

Digitized by Google

We may refer to another and a specious objection. The Israelites were always brought by Providence under the influence of the highest displays of external art; first in Egypt, then in Babylon. And from these sources, by divine guidance, they drew many of the materials of their own worship. That sumptuous tabernacle of admirable proportions; those cherubim which overshadowed the mercy-seat; all that brilliant furniture and architectural display which powerfully affected the sight of the Israelites, were they not symbols designed to elevate his thoughts to the invisible tabernacle, the throne of glory, the assembly of angels bowed before the unveiled splendors of divine grace and wisdom? If for a carnal people, prone to idolatry, and living among idolaters, these symbols were the support of religious sentiment, how much less danger, and how much more benefit, do they not offer to more spiritual people? Such is the argument whose weakness the apologists of Rome have often sought to conceal by the brilliancy of their style. But precisely because this external employment of types and symbols was appropriate to the worship of Jews, it is inappropriate to Christian worship. For, the fundamental principle, which is the key of the two dispensations, is this; that the relation of the old covenant to the new, is not that of a type to a superior type, but of the type to the thing typified. We profess in Jesus Christ the realities which the Jewish worship prefigured; shall we let go of them to lay hold again upon the shadow?

But even if it should be denied that we are in the full possession of these realities, would arbitrary symbols, (and arbitrary they will always be,) enhance their value? We must repeat, that material art can only imitate what it has seen. Do you forget, then, or are you ignorant of, the numerous texts which shew that Moses had seen the heavenly model he was commissioned to imitate? "See that thou make all things," it was said to him, "according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount." Both Testaments attach a high value to this fact. Likewise, when Solomon was commissioned to erect the temple, God himself drew the plan, even to the smallest details. (I Chron., xxviii. 11–13.) What model of this kind has he revealed to you? Where is your Sinai? Is it in the Vatican, in the interval between two orgies, that your chief has, in his turn, contemplated the invisible world? The apostle Paul, rapt to the third heaven, has he reported the

Digitized by Google

plan of your cathedrals, or the model of your statues? It is, probably, in an attentive study of his epistle to the Romans that you have discovered it! — But pardon us! We forgot that your St. Peter was once a statue of Jupiter, and that your temples were pagan temples.

No, you will not succeed in leading us to take your worship for Christian worship; if, for no other reason, because it is a parody of the Jewish worship.

Our religious buildings will never have an imposing and splendid character. Will the men who have received and understood the commission to devote themselves, with all they possess, to the propagation of the truth which saves, and to the comforting of the poor, ever have millions of superfluous wealth? Let us not fear to present this form of utilitarianism in the boldest manner; the utilitarianism which is not selfishness, the utilitarianism of love, which has not yet attained to a very high degree among us. Nay, this is the very requirement both of the letter and of the spirit of the gospel. A single text, which we may not pass in silence, might seem to enfeeble our assertion. "Might not this ointment," said Judas, "have been sold for three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor?" "Let her alone," replied the Saviour, "why trouble ye her? She hath wrought a good work on me." We have recently heard this passage explained by two men who have no other points of contact but those furnished by time and space. Mr. Vinet concluded from it, that intention gives value to action; and that utility is the sacrifice of the heart to Christ, whatever may be its manifestation. The other, a legitimate heir to the exegesis of the Tempter, sees in this declaration, a formal command to spend in popular carousals the funds designed for the poor. However this may be, this text of Scripture, far from repelling utilitarianism, as we have presented it, consecrates it; since it presents to us the act of the sinful woman as altogether exceptional, and authorized by the solemnity of the circumstances, and by the approaching death of Christ. The rule is this: Always you shall have the poor to remind you of the only real employment of riches, always an opportunity to benefit them. So long as this is the case, we shall not be justifiable in burying enormous sums in stone monuments. Besides, Jesus Christ has himself pointed out the way of honoring him with our riches: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of

Digitized by Google

the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." The heavenly building which will receive us, is not, indeed, made by human hands, and our alms will not defray the expenses of it. But is the obligation to bless Christ's poor, on that account, less evident, less absolute, less universal? It is then in the name of Christian utility, that we strike another blow at Christian architecture. Yes, better assuage the sorrows of a thousand families, better erect ten modest chapels among the population who hunger and thirst for the Gospel, than to stretch a golden dome over the infidelity of a nation. Here we reach a field, where we can successfully attack the extravagance of Christian art.

The Church, which at first made profession of being in daily expectation of the coming of her Lord in the clouds of heaven, at length became weary of standing on her feet, with uplifted eyes. She then calculated the times and the seasons, and made it out to be ages distant; and Satan added some ciphers to the amount. Then she wanted to find some convenient place for reposing her weary head. She sat down in the midst of the world, and gradually became petrified; she became confounded, identified, shall we say, with the walls to which she had lent her name.

What is now intended by the phrase: "I am going to the Church!" And what is a Church, in our modern Christianity? Is it the meeting of "lively stones," or the stone building; the spiritual house of God, or the mullions; "the pillar and ground of the truth," or the colonnades which make an imposing retreat for falsehood?

It is a very significant fact, that the most beautiful monuments of what is called Christian art, all belong to the epochs of most profound spiritual darkness. Chateaubriand, the author *par excellence*, Catholic and poetic, has he not refuted himself in this remarkable, and too little noticed, passage: "Truth does not belong to a stone; but error cannot vegetate, save in the shadow of the sanctuary!" This remark is almost entirely just; yet you cannot say that error needs protection; alas! it often germinates and bears fruit under the open sky; but it is true that it never flourishes more than when protected by an imposing and attractive institution. Why, if not because the imagination is with most men, the substitute for conscience? The religion of the majority consists in admiration. They are thankful that they can yield

Digitized by Google

their intellectual being up to religious impressions, while their moral being is more and more inaccessible. It was not thus, through the imagination, that Paul proposed to lead captives to the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ. Men have learned the how to take hold of the cross on the sensational side, in order to avoid being themselves taken hold of by the gospel. They give it a large tribute of admiration, on condition that it will exact no other; and the more they consider themselves to have given it, the less do they feel the necessity of giving themselves. Need we recall here the well known words of the most polished and agreeable slanderer of revelation: "The simplicity of the Scriptures astonishes me, their majesty confounds me!" It would be perhaps more interesting to call to mind the part which these words play in rationalistic preaching. They have of right, their place in a majority of these discourses. The hearer has a presentiment of their approach for some minutes before they appear; and makes ready to admire in his turn, on the faith of Rousseau. The preacher has gained his point, when he has made them sound forth majestically. Such is the theological audience, before which they are uttered with a popular elocution. If such is man's treatment of the gospel itself, the phenomenon is even still more striking, when evangelical truths are carried into the pulpit by Christian orators. In general, the more admiration they produce, the less genuine fruit is to be found. A studied delivery provokes criticism on the form, and has no affinity with the authority of teaching. We aver with proper qualifications, but we cannot refrain from averring, that the greatest simplicity in worship,* and much more in the externals of worship, is the best means of preventing this trick of the human heart.

Christian architecture is indissolubly bound to the fiction of a State Church. We know that at this day temples are not the habitation of God, but of man. While the nations desire to have them splendid, the "little flock," is content to find everywhere a modest retreat, to worship God, in spirit and in truth. The time is approaching, has, in fact, come, when the vault of heaven, the valleys of the mountains, the shade of the forest, will serve for the sanctuary of God's faithful worshippers. To conclude; in the name of nature, yea, of art; in the name of Christian utility;

* True eloquence despises eloquence.—*Pascal.*

Digitized by Google

in the name of the study of the human heart; in the name of individualism, we will cheerfully sacrifice the edifice to edification.

As to sculpture and painting, what place can they find in Christian worship? They can claim no place, only so far as they can reproduce for us the exact image and expression of our divine Saviour, as he appeared among men. When that occurs, then we shall at least believe that the question deserves examination; until then, we cannot even entertain the question of employing them. But it is exactly there that they must fail. In fact, a portrait is not merely a reproduction of the features and form, of the relief even, of a physiognomy; it is above all, the expression of the individual character; of the individual, we say; for the first quality of a portrait unquestionably is, individuality. To effect this, the artist must first of all be penetrated with a notion, clear and distinct, of the genius of his model. According to these universally admitted principles, what signifies a portrait of Jesus Christ, even if we admit, which is utterly incredible, that tradition has preserved to us the memory of his features? Here is the matter; where is the soul? Here is the transparency; where is the light? We shall never obtain a distinct notion of the character of Jesus Christ, for that which distinguished him, is, that he is not individual, but human; — the personality of him who came to correspond to the most diverse, the most opposite individualities, could not be a specialty. The specialty of Jesus Christ, is, that he was universal, that he collected and contained in himself all the features of all characters in their perfection. The expression which one should give to his face, whatever it might be, could satisfy only a small number of persons, precisely because his countenance suited all. Thus Guido, who made only the heads of Christ, felt that in each of his admirable *Ecce Homos*, he had produced a *man*, but not *the* man. The mystics have attempted the solution of the problem, and have approached as near as possible to it, in making portraits of Jesus Christ without any expression. These pictures have not the expression of death, for even death has an expression; it is something of an indefinable and majestic simplicity. The high authority of the apostle's words gives the law as to all these attempts so unfortunate in their results: "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

Digitized by Google

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN REVIEW.

DEAR SIR: I address you as the representative of an unknown writer, in your number for December, 1848. I see in that number, a severe censure upon me, for some strictures upon Dr. Carson, contained in my work on Baptism. Those strictures were based, in part, on what I regarded as a gross misstatement of facts, persisted in after I had pointed it out. You deem my view of the case erroneous, and on this ground base your censure of me. The passage of Dr. Carson, on which I pass censure, is the following:

"Well, how does Mr. Beecher bring out his proof, [that *baptizo* means to *purify*]? If the writings of the fathers prove that they understood this word in Mr. B.'s sense, must not Mr. B. prove this by alleging examples of the use of the word in this sense? Common sense, what do you say? *But Mr. B. attempts no such thing;* he does not appeal to the use of the word by the Fathers, but to other words applied by the Fathers to the same ordinance.

"Now I do not charge my opponent with dishonesty in the use of this argument; I do him the justice to believe that he is the dupe of his own sophistry; but it is a sophistry childishly weak."

This is a direct assertion, that the *whole* proof offered by me consisted only of examples of the use of other words besides *baptizo*, and that I did not appeal to the use of that word at all. Nor is this all. He asserts, that I *attempted* no such thing. What now are the facts? My words, in the argument to which Dr. Carson was replying, were these: "They often use *baptismos* in the legal and sacrificial sense, so as to exclude any idea but *katharismos* (purification.) This statement I sustained by three examples, each of them containing the word *baptismos*. Was it possible, in the nature of things, for Dr. Carson more entirely to misrepresent facts? This I pointed out to him, but he again published the same statement unaltered. A proceeding so contrary to Christian integrity, seemed to me to demand censure, and I wrote accordingly.

I said: "In this case he not only grossly misstated a simple matter of fact, but he then ridiculed and insulted me on the basis of that misstatement. I pointed out to him the entire falsehood of his statement. Would not an honest man correct it in a second edition? Would not an honorable man apologize for the groundless insult, and retract it? But Dr. Carson does neither.

Digitized by Google

In the last edition of his reply, he retains the same obviously false statement, and the same insult to me based upon it." I then notice his professions, and thus proceed: "When a man makes such professions, whilst doing such acts, I cannot but call his professions the guise of zeal for the glory of God, and declare that he is unwilling to admit the truth, and therefore misrepresents and denies it."

To defend Dr. Carson, you try to shew, that the passages quoted by me did not present "a case of the actual use of the word as such in the language." It were easy to shew both the falsehood and the absurdity of this statement. But suppose that it were so, still I ask, did not I regard them as cases of the use of the word; and did I not as such adduce them? Even if I did not succeed in producing proper examples of the use of the word, yet did I not *make the attempt*, and produce what I regarded as such? Yet Dr. Carson says: "*Mr. Beecher attempts no such thing;*" and you undertake to defend him in so saying!

But suppose Dr. Carson had said, in the passage which I censure, what you try to impute to him as his meaning. Suppose he had said, not only that I quoted some passages containing other words besides *baptismos*, but also some passages containing that very word, and that I supposed them to be proper cases of the use of the word in the language, whereas they are not, would not the whole scope, spirit, and meaning of the passage have been of necessity changed? Could he have added in immediate connexion with this, that I *attempted no such thing* as to appeal to the use of the word *baptismos?* Yet this is what he has said. Notice the power of his words. They do not say that I attempted to do the thing in question, and failed; but that I did not *even attempt to do any thing of the kind.* And it is on this absolute exclusion, that the whole force of his effort to hold me up to contempt, as the "dupe of my own sophistry, and that a sophistry childishly weak," depends.

I therefore regard your effort to defend Dr. Carson, as a total failure, even if it were true that the passages alleged by me did not contain "a case of the actual use of the word as such in the language." But I totally deny that this is the fact, and you have given no proof that it is. *Baptismos* is either used as an appropriated name of a rite, or it is used in its common and unappropriated sense. In either case it is a part of the Greek

Digitized by Google

tongue, and has a meaning, and the uses of it are actual uses of the word as such in the language. It follows, therefore, that you are guilty of the very thing which you charge on me. You have passed upon me the censure of making the most deliberate and ungenerous attack on the moral integrity of an opponent that you recollect ever to have met in all the history of religious controversy. You have passed on me this censure, not only without proof, but without the possibility of proof. The facts are before you, and before the public. Until you can shew that I did not *even attempt* to allege examples of the use of the word *baptismos* in the sense of *purification*, you can offer no defence of Dr. Carson; and my censure, severe as it is, was deserved.

But why are you so peculiarly sensitive to the impeachment of the integrity of one man, although based on facts, — and not sensitive to the impeachment of the integrity of all men who are not convinced by the arguments on your side of the question, although based on no facts? Did I not present for your consideration, this sentence, published under the sanction of the American Baptist Publication Society: "We frankly confess that the more we read on the baptismal controversy, the more our charity compels us to struggle *against the conviction that forces itself on us*, that on this subject it is not light that is most wanting, but *religious honesty*." That is, though they struggle against it, yet a conviction forces itself on them, that the opponents of the Baptists have not religious honesty. I will not say that this is the most deliberate and ungenerous attack upon the moral integrity of all who are not convinced by the arguments of the Baptists, that I recollect ever to have met with in the history of religious controversy. On that point, I shall leave all men to judge for themselves. But of one thing I am sure, that while you have no words of censure for such a wholesale attack on the religious honesty of those who are not convinced by your arguments, an attack which it is utterly impossible to sustain by any proof whatever, it ill becomes you to censure me for reproving Dr. Carson for persisting in a gross and palpable misstatement of facts; and that, after it had been clearly presented to his notice, as a wrong that demanded redress. Nor do I believe that God is indifferent to such things, or that he will accept those professions of zeal for his glory which stand connected with such wrongs remaining unredressed. He has said: "If thou bring thy gift to

Digitized by Google

the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come, and offer thy gift."

One other thing I would present for your attention, which you seem entirely to have forgotten. Dr. Carson was the assailant, and in all cases in which I have used severity, I have done it either in self-defence, or in defence of the moral soundness of the public mind, against his style of controversy. Even his own countrymen deem him guilty of abuse in dealing with his antagonist, and his friends expostulated with him for it. To this I add that my censures are logical, and not passionate and unfounded. Shew me, in any case, that I pass a censure which is not proved to be well founded, and I will cheerfully retract it.

The mere passing of censures is not of necessity wrong. You do not seem to have regarded it as wrong to censure me with great severity, because you supposed that you had good grounds for it. I have, it is true, shewn that you had none. Yet I admit your sincerity and conscientiousness, so long as you supposed that you had such grounds. In like manner have I conscientiously censured Dr. Carson, and shall not withdraw my censures till they are shewn to be unfounded.

I am happy to hear you say: "We have no disposition to justify, much less to imitate, Dr. Carson's style of writing." And yet I think that you have undertaken to defend one of the worst and most defenceless portions of his writings. Not only is it based on falsehood, but its whole tone and spirit is unworthy of a Christian controversalist. After defending this, you need not shrink from defending anything else.

But if I have succeeded at last in opening the eyes of my Baptist brethren to the fact which you seem to concede, that Dr. Carson's style of writing cannot be justified, and ought not to be imitated, I have not labored in vain. For years his works have been circulated here; and this is the first concession that has been made, that it is not desirable to sympathize with them, and to imitate them as models. They have been praised immoderately; but till I exposed and censured them, no voice of warning, at least in this country, was raised against them. Truly the progress is hopeful. Now you have no disposition to justify, much less to imitate, his style of writing. In this I perfectly agree with you.

Digitized by Google

I do not justify him. I have not imitated him. True I have used severity, but only such as was necessary to repel his abusive attacks. Never have I made an offensive war on him. And I do not hesitate to say, that, in my judgment, it is beyond your power to shew that any of my censures on him are unfounded.

A proper analysis and exposure of the false reasoning contained in your piece, I defer to another occasion.

I am yours, affectionately,

E. BEECHER.

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE. — The times of Jason and the Argonauts seem to be returning on a vastly enlarged scale. Not that we would intimate that the expeditions which are getting up and off for the Sacramento are all of a *fleecing* character; though we have heard rumors of two cargoes of brass filings which have been sent there to be shipped back again in the character of the real "precious dust," — and also of a "huge pile of consciences," left at Panama by some of the adventurers on their way. Jason's famous fleece, considered in a matter-of-fact way, is presumed to have been only a common sheepskin, used to collect the gold dust in washing the auriferous sands of the Phasis. This river is regarded as the Pison, which watered the land of Havilah, or Colchis, "where," as the sacred historian saith, "there is gold; and the gold of that land is good." Yes, it was good; for it was created when God saw everything that he had made; "and behold, it was very good." It was in being when God planted the garden of Eden. It was made for man in his primeval innocence; and had he continued in that state, gold would have been a thousand times more useful to him, than it has been since the fall. And even now, perverted and idolized as it is, the precious metal is applied to many benevolent and sacred uses. It is not easy to see how the best of Christians can get along without a portion of it, or of some of its representatives. Pious men, at home here, are expected to do something by which they can make money; and, when it is made, to consecrate it to God. Why may not such men go to California for gold to be devoted to the service of Christ and his cause? It is true that their piety may suffer, and they may lose their lives, if not their souls, while gone on their venturous quest. But where, in this world, is the child of God secure from temptation and death? To some young men, a life of idleness among the facilities for hurtful indulgence, may be fraught with quite as much of risk to morals and health, as an expedition to San Francisco. Whether it is expedient for any person to run the venture, can only be determined by the circumstances of each particular case. There are but two

Digitized by Google

sorts of persons whom we could find it in our hearts to encourage in such an undertaking. These are such as give no reason to hope that they will be any the better for staying here, and who cannot be made worse, let them go where they will; — and such as may be relied upon, so far as reliance can be placed on any one, to exert a salutary and Christian influence in any region whither they may go. Character must be tested. As Thomas Fuller said: "Men have a touch-stone whereby to try gold; but gold is the touch-stone whereby to try men." Happy the Californian emigrant who shall abide the trial, and be sealed with the true stamp of God! He must have rare gifts of watchfulness and prayer. We would solemnly urge upon him the maxim of the excellent Dr. Payson: "Look well to your motives!" Well would it be for the multitudes who will precipitate themselves on those westernmost shores to dig for hidden treasures, if there were a strong infusion of such men, who should do their utmost to guide the wanderers to yet another and incomparably richer country, of which it may emphatically be said: "the gold of *that* land is good." It enriches the soul forever, with wealth which cannot be lost, stolen, or exhausted, and which gives full contentment to the heart. It is a land whose people are crowned with gold that never grows dim, and the golden harps ring with unceasing notes of richest harmony, and they walk in streets of gold, found no where but in the eternal city of God.

MEMOIR OF MATTHEW HENRY. — If this worthy had not been converted when quite young, his life would have been too short for the preparation of his famous commentary, which yet he did not live to complete in full. He was converted at eleven years of age. In his diary, on his birth-day, when thirteen years of age, he writes: "Lord Jesus, I bless thee for thy Word, for good parents, that I was taken into covenant betimes in baptism, that I have had a good education, that I am thine." And in later years he said: "If any good work hath been wrought in my soul, I desire thankfully to acknowledge the influence of my infant baptism therein." For obvious reasons these, and similar expressions from that great Bible Christian, will not be found in the very neat and instructive Memoir, prepared for the American Tract Society from the work of J. B. Williams, Esq., of England. Still it is a delightful record of saintly experience, and of the heaven-like life in a right old Puritan family, where even the girls studied the Hebrew Scriptures at seven years of age. It is certainly no small commendation of Henry's voluminous commentary, now a hundred and fifty years old, that it is still stereotyped and sold notwithstanding the boasted improvements of our age in the science of interpretation. Every minister who has found among his flock any member whose religious character was chiefly formed by the study of this work, must have admired that character for its intelligence, decision, and zeal. Cocceius laid it down as a fundamental rule of interpretation, that the language of Scripture is to be understood in every sense of which it is susceptible. Henry, on the contrary, seeks to exhaust the meaning of the text, without drawing from it anything more than the sincere milk of the Word. For as Thomas Fuller

Digitized by Google

says: "Such as in expounding of Scripture reap more than God did sow there, never eat what they reap thence, because such grainless husks, when seriously threshed out, vanish all into chaff." One of Henry's chief excellences is the use he makes of Jewish history to illustrate Christian experience. This, we apprehend, is the great object for which God has preserved to the Church those remarkable records of his dealings with his ancient covenant people. "The whole Jewish history," says Coleridge, "in all its details, is so admirably adapted to, and suggestive of, symbolical use, as to justify the belief that the spiritual application, the interior and permanent sense, was in the original intention of the inspiring Spirit, though it might not have been present, as an object of distinct consciousness, to the inspired writers."

MEMOIR OF REV. DR. MILNER. — The American Tract Society has done just honor to one of its oldest, firmest, and most active friends, in publishing a splendid memorial of his virtues, piety, and usefulness. Dr. Milner was great in goodness. His celebrity rests on this foundation, and not on any sectarian zeal, or pragmatical bustle in behalf of any party wrapped up in itself. Some who used to reproach him as a "Presbyterian in an Episcopalian's robes," now that he has departed in the odor of sanctity, seem disposed to complain that his Life should be issued under such auspices, as to prevent the fragrant incense of his good name from being confined to the temples of the sect which he loved with a most sincere, though not bigoted and exclusive, attachment. Let such remember, that the excellence of Dr. Milner will be a reproach to his denomination, if it shall stand alone therein, and not be imitated and multiplied in the communion which claims him. His Church can suffer no detriment from an account of one of its brightest ornaments, given by another of the best it has left. Rev. Dr. Stone, the writer of this Memoir, fully "understands his man," and has delineated a beautiful character, in a no less beautiful picture, which the American Tract Society has gratefully placed in a rich and appropriate frame.

BUNYAN'S PILGRIM. — The same Society has issued a most elegant edition of this religious classic. Engravings, printing, binding, and gilding are all superb, — unless you take the worth of the *matter* into account, and then all that the artists can do, seems poor in comparison. We would like to see "honest John," looking at a copy of this exquisite edition of his lovely dream. He would think that he was dreaming still, faster than ever. This "love of a book," so blessed to give and so blessed to take, will serve as a holiday present all the year round. It can be had for a hundred and fifty paltry bits of copper, though "its price is above rubies." It is well known that the consummate critic, S. T. Coleridge, declared that he had thrice studied the Pilgrim's Progress; once as a poet, once as a theologian, and once as a practical Christian; and on each perusal, assigned it the highest rank among writings of either kind. We subjoin two more instructive comments, collected from different writings of the same competent judge. "The catalogue of the works written by the

Digitized by Google

Reformers, and in the two centuries after the Reformation, contains many volumes far superior in Christian light and unction to the best of the Fathers. How poor and unevangelic is Hermas in comparison with our 'Pilgrim's Progress!'" The other passage, dated June, 1830, is as follows: "I know of no book, the Bible excepted as above all comparison, which I, according to my judgment and experience, could so safely recommend as teaching and enforcing the whole saving truth according to the mind that was in Christ Jesus, as the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' It is, in my conviction, incomparably the best summary of evangelical theology ever produced by a writer not miraculously inspired."

LOUISE MERTON. — The Massachusetts Sabbath School Society is pouring out such an issue of excellent publications for the young, that it is impossible for us to notice them all as they come. We turn our attention to this little book, because it is from the pen of an accomplished lady, and suggests the thought, that a large part of this class of books ought to emanate from the female mind. No one can be better qualified for such undertakings, than the mother of a family of bright boys, or the instructress of a school full of life, where all are inquisitive, and eager to learn. Let such exercise their faculty in furnishing food for the young mind, adapted to its wants, and to that most interesting stage of mental growth. "It is no news," says an old writer, "in God's harvest, to see women with their sickles a reaping." May there be many such, who like Ruth, the Moabitess, "go not to glean in another field," but gather here the precious sheaves which they shall joyfully bring in their bosoms to the garner of the Lord.

RUNAWAY GIRLS. — Among the novel features of the times, is the propensity of young women to forsake the parental roof, and to depart unattended to parts unknown. We have heretofore heard often of elopements, and abductions, and clandestine marriages. But this fashion of girls, to cast themselves loose on the world, is of recent origin. Some cases of this nature have made much noise in the papers, and large rewards have been offered for the fugitives. Others take their flight, and are not thought worth the expense of recovering them. In our judgment, this new token of increasing demoralization among the young, is to be ascribed to the reading provided for them. Vile *novellettes*, garnished with coarse wood-cuts, the cheapest trash in all the cheap literature of the day, pamper every romantic sentiment and stimulate the thirst for adventure. The imagination is inflamed, and the passions are excited to restless cravings, till the monotony and the restraints of a quiet home become intolerable miseries. Rev. Sydney Smith says, in reference to such compositions, that the grand objection to them is, "that it is impossible to do any thing, or perform any human duty, while we are engaged in reading them. Who can read Mr. Hallam's Middle Ages, or extract the root of an impossible quantity, or draw up a bond, when he is in the middle of Mr. Trebeck and lady Charlotte Duncan? How can the boy's lesson be heard, about the Jove-nourished Achilles, or his six miserable verses upon Dido be corrected, when Henry Granby and Mr. Courtenay are both

Digitized by Google

making love to Miss Jermyn? Common life palls in the middle of these artificial scenes. All is emotion when the book is open; — all dull, flat, and feeble when it is shut." The excitable girl, weak in head and heart, intoxicates her fancy with this "wine of satan," till her father's house seems to her like an imprisoning cage; — and so some pleasant morning, the pretty little miss is "among the missing." When called to breakfast, the bird is fled from the nest and gone to flutter in the forest, till she is snatched by the hawk, or snared by the fowler. Then the parents fall to tearing their hair and smiting their breasts; without so much as suspecting that they may have brought this terrible affliction into their family, by subscribing for the "illustrated newspaper," with its pretended thousand-dollar prize-tales; or by purchasing the tawdry pamphlet, with its silly love-story. Till this washy flood shall be diked out of the home-lots, and all the paltry freight wafted upon it shall be declared contraband on the domestic shores, we must expect the young men to become dashingly wicked, and the young women to become extravagantly foolish. The best dike to be reared against this in-coming flood is a large provision of such reading for the family as shall both interest and edify. Pile up a sea-wall of good books around the hearth and the centre-table. Nor is this enough. Heads of families must, from time to time, make special search, lest some of the unlawful goods be smuggled into the house without their knowledge. Much mischief has thus been wrought in cases within our knowledge, when the parents were unaware of what was going on till the ruinous result has all at once exploded upon them.

MONTHLY RECORD.

The Christian World. — This paper, which, for a few years, has been the mouthpiece of that portion of the Unitarians who call themselves revivalists and reformers, will utter their sentiments no more. Its lips are silent in death. This is the only *world* which has fulfilled the prophetical romancings of the Millerites, by coming to an end in 1848. Doubtless those who find fulfilments of the prophecies in passing events, might decypher in this "the number of the beast."

Park Street Church. — Rev. Mr. Stone of Middletown, Con., is shortly to be installed over this important congregation. This gentleman is thought to be the right material for building up a church. We trust, that under his ministry, that famous and useful church will see great and lasting prosperity.

Legislative Chaplains. — The chaplain of the senate of Massachusetts is a good orthodox minister, and the chaplain of the House of Representatives is a Baptist. Both of them were elected by very large majorities. It is within the memory of most of our readers, when it was very rare that any but a Unitarian was chosen to guide

Digitized by Google

the devotions of the Great and General Court, and implore divine guidance on its counsels, and divine blessing on its acts. The very frequent choice, within a few years, of evangelical ministers to perform this duty, is one of the signs of the times which shew that times have somewhat changed.

New Church in Lowell Street. — A council called for the formation of a church amid a people who have for some time kept up a very promising assembly for public worship, has the subject under advisement. The council has suspended its decision, until a more full expression can be had of the views of the churches, as to the multiplication of religious societies in the present circumstances of the city.

The Pope's Flight. — The news of the departure of the Pope from his dominions, in the dignified guise of a liveried footman, is confirmed. The Roman mob which once glorified the most liberal *Pio Nino*, now execrates him as a pious ninny, who has not sense enough to be infallible. The Romish priests and prints among us are very wrathful at the treatment which his holiness has received from his subjects, who are soundly abused for their degeneracy. But it is not remembered, that, if the Roman character is deteriorated, it has become so under the influences of popery in its purest and most concentrated form, and in its most unmixed state. There can be no severer condemnation of the system which has had the shaping of them for more than a thousand years.

The Liberator in Bonds. — The last number of this paper has some dismal lamentations over the defections of its friends. It says of the Free Soil party: "Its triumphs have been anything but triumphs to us. It has cost the Liberator many subscribers." It complains that "large numbers, once considered its best friends," have discontinued their subscriptions to that paper; that the co-operation of many abolitionists is "utterly at an end," that the labors of lecturers are frequently declined, and that "many of their once largest meetings have failed almost altogether." It is stated that the deserters have carried off their contributions; and pay far more to the Liberty Party, than they ever did to Garrison's coffers or Pillsbury's pockets. "Free Soil," they say, "has done desperately little for us; but it has dug fearful drains into the treasury that sustains us." "The consciences of many have followed their contributions." Many "are now transformed into open scoffers." The consequent want of funds has compelled the State Committee to cut down all their operations, and to reduce their agents in the field to a single pair. The infatuated conductors of the Liberator seem not to be aware, that the blasphemous attacks in their columns upon the sacred Word of God must complete the ruin of their paper.

Ecclesiastical Novelty. — Most of our readers are aware that twenty-three members of the Reading Church, though forming with their friends a majority of the body, were, or were said to be, excommunicated by the rest. After an intermission of more than a year, the pastor gave

Digitized by Google

notice, on the first Sabbath of January, that on the following Sabbath, he would administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in a hall hired for the purpose, and that none of the excommunicated would be admitted. Accordingly, at the time appointed, he retired from the place of worship, with some fifty of the members of the church, and celebrated the ordinance as arranged. The door was guarded by a janitor, and a town-constable with his pole. Several of the excommunicants claimed the right of admission, but were refused; and several of the other members retired with them, and others did not present themselves at all.

Revival Meetings in Federal Street. — The Unitarians are holding meetings on successive evenings, of the nature of a large conference meeting, for the purpose of raising the standard of spiritual religion among themselves. This is a good omen, shewing that they are dissatisfied with their condition. And if the present excitement does not evaporate in a little small talk on the vague and indefinite generalities of their scheme of belief, and into a little strong talk about different branches of moral reform, it will be well. The sense of spiritual wants will be awakened, — wants such as Unitarianism cannot meet, — wants which nothing can satisfy but atoning blood and renewing grace. It is devoutly to be hoped, that this movement may be urged along by the Holy Spirit, till multitudes who are earnestly feeling after the truth, if haply they may find it, may rejoice in finding that which they are seeking yet without knowing what it is. May God guide and bless their seeking!

ORDINATIONS.

Nov. 5. Mr. B. F. Millerd, Niles, Mich.
Dec. 6. Mr. Nathan B. Rogers, South Church, Hallowell, Me.
" " Mr. John Wickes, Canaan Four Corners, N. Y.
" 13. Mr. George Bushnell, Fourth Church, Worcester, Ms.
" 20. Mr. Ansel D. Harris, Standish, Me.
" 21. Mr. Peter B. Thayer, Garland, Me.

INSTALLATIONS.

Nov. 14. Rev. Hiram Foote, Janesville, Wis.
Dec. 6. Rev. Harvey D. Kitchel, First Cong. Church, Detroit, Mich.
" 26. Rev. William Patton, D. D., Hammond Street Church, New York City.
Jan. 3. Rev. Daniel March, First Cong. Church, Nashua, N. H.
" 10. Rev. Asaph Boutelle, Lunenburg, Ms.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Nov. 17. Rev. Isaac E. Wilkins, Brownville, Me. æ. 48.
" 23. Rev. John Kelley, Hampstead, N. H. æ. 85.
Dec. 14. Rev. Prince Hawes, Brooklyn, N. Y. æ. 65.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. H. SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
L. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill*, *Boston*.

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] MARCH, 1849. [N

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATOR

A

Religious and Literary Magazine

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
Inspiration and the Ministry,	97
The Christian Examiner's Sketch of the Piscataqua Association,	108
Harrison W. Ellis,	116
Our New Territory,	129
The Revival of Religion,	135
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Roger Williams and his Betters,	139
Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society,	140
Imprecations and Inspiration,	141
Journal of the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1620,	142
Hebrew Theocracy,	142
Pamphlets,	143
Monthly Record,	143

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office nine dollars, shall receive six copies of the Christian Observatory for one year.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1848. Oct 30
By exch. of Sup.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

Vol. III. MARCH, 1849. No. 3.

INSPIRATION AND THE MINISTRY.

We offer a few remarks on one of the relations of what may be called the question of a standing or falling Church among us. This question has reference to the authority of the Sacred Scriptures in matters of faith and practice. It is not, however, with us, as it is with the "liberal denominations" so called, a question respecting the supernatural origin of our religion. Every professedly orthodox person concedes at once, that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, and that Christianity is not of men, but from Heaven. We may contend with those who are *without*, as to the reality of a supernatural revelation. But no warfare can ever be waged on this subject within our own ranks. Let ultra liberalism struggle to retain among Christians a precarious foothold on the brink of the awful abyss of pantheism, into which so many of that order have already plunged. But this is not the battle-ground for us. Before it comes to be a question, with any among ourselves, whether Christianity is truly and miraculously from God, they must have broken fellowship with the Orthodox Church, and embraced systems whose principles shake the foundations of belief.

Nor is there reason to apprehend, that, for a long time to come, any considerable number among us will embrace latitudinarian sentiments on the subject of inspiration. It is generally as true now as it was in the days of Shepard and Cotton, that the Bible is esteemed throughout the Orthodox communion as of full authority on all questions of faith and practice. But our danger lies here.

Digitized by Google

Young men, candidates for the sacred office, sound, perhaps, on the main doctrines of grace, but deeply tinctured with an exotic transcendentalism, will from time to time knock at the door of our Associations, for a license to preach the gospel, or summon the Churches to set them apart, by the laying on of hands, to the Christian ministry. The question will thus come up, Whether unsoundness on the subject of inspiration, or, in other words, whether a belief in the Bible as of supreme authority so far, but only so far, as it accords with the feelings of the individual, shall be an insuperable barrier, when the candidate is otherwise generally sound, to ministerial fellowship? This is the question we propose now to consider.

But before we attempt any answer to this question, we think that it should be illustrated, with the greatest possible perspicuity. There have always been shades of difference on the subject of inspiration, in the Orthodox community. Nor are shades of difference incompatible with essential agreement. They may coëxist with an unhesitating confidence in the Sacred Scriptures as the Word of God, and as man's infallible rule of faith and duty. One may believe that the whole Bible was literally, chapter by chapter, and verse after verse, so inspired by the Holy Ghost, that man is no more than the chirographer, while God is the sole author. Another may be willing to go no farther than to say, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God in such a sense, that, whether indited, suggested, or superintended by the Holy Spirit, it yet expresses his mind and will as to what we are to believe and practise, and nothing different. In both these cases the Scriptures retain their supremacy. The religious system which they teach is considered a strictly divine system throughout; and the doctrine which any passage rightly interpreted contains, is the doctrine God requires us to receive.

There may still be differences of opinion as to the specific design of certain books, and the meaning of particular texts. But these differences will give rise to questions of interpretation, not to questions on the authority of the record itself; they are questions to be decided on exegetical principles by the Christian student seeking illumination from above, and anxious to hear what God the Lord hath spoken; believing also, that when he has obtained the true import or meaning of a passage, he has obtained the mind of God as expressed in it.

Digitized by Google

The difference between diversity of opinions on questions of interpretation, and diversity on the great question of the supreme authority of the Scriptures properly understood, is of so much importance to our subject, that we propose to illustrate it by an example. It is affirmed by some, that the Mosaic cosmogony is in flat contradiction to geological facts. Suppose now we allow, for the sake of argument, that there is an apparent disagreement between the deductions of science and the account of the creation contained in the first chapter of Genesis. The rationalist will affirm truly that no clear contradiction to the revelations of nature can be of divine origin. Supposing that he has discovered, as he imagines, such contradiction between the theological and the geological accounts of creation, he at once rejects the former, as an ancient mythical composition utterly unworthy of belief. On the other hand, some zealous defender of the faith, over whose mind the arguments of science have little power, may contend that the creation of the world in six days, and according to the exact order laid down in the Bible, is a doctrine so infallibly revealed, that no geological fact is to have any influence in opposition to it. But has either party manifested wisdom in coming thus suddenly to their results? Nature is from God, and so, we affirm, is the Bible. Both are revelations, and neither can contradict the other. He who denies the truths God has written on the walls of the universe, denies God so far forth, as really as he who denies the truths which are spread over the pages of the Bible. But is there not room for both parties to retain their orthodoxy, the one as an orthodox geologist, and the other as an orthodox theologist? Allow, as we have said, for the sake of argument, an apparent opposition between the two great volumes of revelation. So long as we have sufficient evidence that both came from God, we have no authority to withhold confidence from the one in favor of the other.

Geology is an infant science. Its teachings, undoubtedly, when fully collected and justly interpreted, will be, like the Scriptures, an infallible expression of divine wisdom. But there are questions of interpretation in geology. The facts of science may be conceded, and there still be a diversity of opinion as to the meaning of these facts, and their bearing upon established opinions. No man can be justified, in the present state of zoological and geological knowledge, in affirming that the first chapter of

Digitized by Google

Genesis bears the stamp of falsehood upon it. He is bound to wait till the evidence is all in; and till it is ascertained that the facts of nature cannot be fairly interpreted so as to harmonize with those of inspiration.

On the other hand, we may concede to geology all that its most ardent scholars can demand, and we have still a question of interpretation as to the exact meaning of the Scriptures themselves. Great progress has been made in the science of hermeneutics since the middle ages, and especially since the commencement of the nineteenth century; and every year is shedding new light on this important part of theology. The great astronomical facts of the Copernican system are now universally conceded; no Galileo fears imprisonment for blasphemy when he teaches them, nor does the most jealous biblical student feel troubled about them. They all harmonize with the now universally received modes of interpretation. So in geology, the facts of science may aid the explanation of Scripture, and both revelations exist together in beautiful agreement. Already theology, by many of its soundest teachers, concedes what geology first demands as to the original creation, namely, that it took place at an unknown but immense period of time before the world was fitted up for the immediate occupation of man. The geological and the theological cosmogony agree also in this, that all things were originally brought into existence by an intelligent Creator, that the earth before the production of light was for a period enveloped in water and darkness, that the last great work of creation was man, and that he must have been called into being about the time which the Mosaic account represents. Without dwelling upon other coincidences, these are sufficient to inspire both the naturalist and the biblicist with confidence in the two great sources of revelation, and with the belief that a more perfect knowledge will harmonize what may now seem discordant in them.

In the meanwhile, the theologian may solve his difficulties, for the present, without misgiving as to the divine authorship of the sacred record. He may suppose, with Professor Silliman and others, that the term translated *days*, in our version, signifies *epochs*, each perhaps of immense duration; and so make out, as he has done, a Scriptural cosmogony which shall harmonize with the successions of geological eras. Or, he may suppose, without violence to the sacred record, that during the great unknown

Digitized by Google

period between the creation of the earth out of nothing and the introduction of man upon it, all those mighty convulsions and changes, the evident traces of which astound the geologist, took place; — that after the heavy foundations of granite, molten by internal fires, were poured over the earth, and other igneous masses consolidated upon them, and the whole series of stratified rocks was piled above them, and after partial creations of vegetable and animal life, the fossilized remains of which are now so abundantly found in the crust of our globe, the Almighty, being about to introduce immortal man, his own child, created in his own image, upon it, saw fit to furnish and beautify for his special use a world which he had ages before called into existence, and had been gradually preparing for this end; — and that *this latter work* of furnishing and adorning, he accomplished literally in six days. Surely the occasion was worthy of the miracle. And if this theory involves the idea that animals and plants must have been created *in full growth*, at the time the earth was fitted up for man, we answer, If geology does not corroborate such a supposition, it cannot effectually deny it. Man was unquestionably called into being, not as an infant, but as a man. Geology furnishes no embryonic fossils of the human race. And if it be true that there is no variety appreciable to the senses, in forms of animal life during the early period of their ovicular condition, it is equally true that no embryonic animal can be developed into anything different from its own kind. Man could not have descended from the fishes, or the beasts of prey. The eggs of polypi produce only polypi, the eggs of trout produce only trout, the eggs of the sparrow and the bulfinch produce each their own species, and no other. Nor could man, in the natural order of things, have come into being originally as an embryo of his own class, — for there is no conceivable way in which such a germ could have been developed into perfect humanity, nor in which helpless infancy, without an additional miracle, could have been nourished into manhood. When *man* was created, he was created *man*. If so, the supposition is not irrational, that, after plants and animals had been successively created and destroyed during uncounted years, full grown animals and full grown plants were called into being at the same period with full grown man.

Or if any one objects to these theories, he may suppose, if he will, that the first chapter of Genesis was never intended as a

Digitized by Google

detailed account of the order and manner of creation, but only to convey to the human mind some hieroglyphic or parabolic representation of the great fact, that God made the world, and furnished it for man; just as some of the descriptions of Heaven are not to be taken literally, but as distant similitudes of unspeakable things. Such an explanation may be unsatisfactory, but all must perceive a difference between an error as to the meaning of a passage, and an utter rejection of the passage itself.

The theologian may adopt still other methods of interpretation without denying the record. Or he may say frankly, that he does not understand what the Holy Spirit intended to teach respecting the creation of the world, but that he holds the subject under advisement as he does many of the prophecies, waiting for further light. In the meanwhile, his principle is, that the *real* meaning of the passage in question, expresses the mind of God on the subject. He receives the record with awe, as Pharaoh did his dream, but seeks in vain as yet for some Joseph to give the explanation.

We hope that this example will clearly illustrate what we mean, when we say that there is a manifest difference between diversity on mere questions of interpretation, and diversity of opinion as to the authority of the record itself. The same remarks will apply to the Bible generally. One may think that the Book of Judges, for instance, was dictated by the Holy Spirit word for word, as it now stands in the Hebrew canon. Another may think that it was collected by Samuel the prophet, from more ancient records, and revised by him under a superintending influence, which made it such a history as God was pleased to have transmitted for our instruction. In either case the man is a believer in the authority and inspiration of that Scripture. But if without any other guide than his own understanding or his own feelings, he allows himself to say, This chapter is of God, and this chapter is of man, — it is evident that he does not stand on the same platform with those who receive the whole Bible as from God.

Now, the practical question for the Orthodox Church to settle is, Whether a person, however talented, however orthodox in other respects, and however devout, who yet adopts the principle that it is proper to reject those portions of Scripture as uninspired, which do not accord in his opinion with certain other truths, or with his mental sensations, or with the inspirations of his own

Digitized by Google

understanding, is a suitable person to be endorsed as a preacher of the gospel of Christ? The question is not, Whether the man is a *pious* man, an able man, capable of doing much good; nor whether he shall be hindered from preaching under such sanctions as he can obtain, and to such congregations as are disposed to hear him? but the question is, Whether he is a safe teacher; and so safe, that we are willing to endorse for his influence in our churches, in our congregations, and in the community at large?

If called to give a direct answer to this question, we must answer it *negatively*, and for reasons which follow.

To us, the doctrine of inspiration stands on immovable foundations. He who denies it seems to be deficient in logical discernment, or wanting in that humility, docility, and spirituality which are essential to a full perception of the truth, and to the right inculcation of it. We cannot, at this time, go into the argument for inspiration. Our limits forbid us to do more than to say, that assuming the existence of Jesus Christ, and the honesty of his disciples in recording their Master's sayings, — postulates which no Christian will reject, — we have all the principles which are necessary to demonstrate the doctrine in question. Christ promised to his disciples the descent of the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, to aid them in teaching his religion. This divine Being was to furnish them with unpremeditated answers when they should be questioned before magistrates and kings, to bring all Christ's teachings to their remembrance, to make known to them many things which previous to their Master's death they could not comprehend or bear, to reveal to them future events, and to guide them into *all the truth*. This Spirit was to abide with them and be in them. In consequence of their receiving him, they were to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and to be ministers plenipotentiary in completing the organization of the Church. When we remember, also, the great work to which the original disciples were called, and that as preparatory to it the Saviour breathed on them, saying: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," — the authority of their writings in all religious matters seems to follow as a consequence which cannot be overthrown.

In a similar manner, if our limits would allow, we could easily demonstrate the inspiration of all the authors of the New Testament.

Digitized by Google

Moreover, while the Old Testament was decidedly sanctioned by our Saviour as divine, — and that, too, without one qualification, exception, or caution against any possible admixture of human errors, — we find the inspired apostles saying of it, that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that holy men of God spake in them as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

We have only indicated, without attempting to develop, one of the arguments for the inspiration of the Scriptures. But this argument is so invincible in its character, that they who cannot feel its force sufficiently to be convinced that the writers of the Bible are safe teachers in matters of religion, are not entitled to be endorsed as safe teachers of religion themselves.

But waiving this consideration, what confidence can we have, that a person who rejects the orthodox doctrine of inspiration, will long remain sound on any of the other principles of the gospel? What standard has he of appeal? What safeguard has he against error? Nothing surely but his own reason, his own inspiration, his mere feelings. While by transcendental vision he can perceive as divine revelations the doctrines of the Trinity, the atonement, entire natural depravity, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, so long he believes them. But the moment that, through prejudice, self-love, pride of independence, or any of the delusions of Satan, he *feels* those doctrines to be unfounded in truth, that moment he rejects them. Now he knows them to be true, because, he says, they are true; then he will know them to be false, though he can give no other reason, than that he knows they are false. If we license such a man to preach the gospel, what security can we have that he will long hold to a single leading principle of the gospel which he now desires to preach? Is it wise, would it be right, for us to license and especially to ordain, a person to take part with us in the ministry of reconciliation, who cannot lay his finger on a single chapter or verse in the Bible, and say, — I know this passage to be from God, — for any better reason than that it accords with his present understanding and feelings? When he has given up the doctrine of inspiration, he has gone out to sea in the dark, without rudder or compass, and nothing less than a miracle can save him from making shipwreck of the faith.

But suppose that some young theosophist, who thinks his own inspiration nearly equal to St. Paul's, should remain essentially

Digitized by Google

orthodox on other points, what must be his influence over the congregations he undertakes to instruct? Must it not be to undermine their confidence in the whole system of Christianity? Their spiritual teacher does not think that the first chapter of Genesis is inspired, because it seems to disagree with geological facts. He does not think that the Books of the Chronicles are inspired, because they contain some supposed errors in genealogy. He does not think the Psalms inspired, because David cursed his enemies. He does not think that Paul always wrote his epistles under the influence of inspiration, because he seemed to expect the immediate advent of Christ. Without adopting the explanations of these difficulties which have satisfied thousands of minds as enlightened and sound, to say the least, as his own, and without exercising that "long patience," which the Bible encourages in seeking the truth, he at once cuts the Gordian knot wherever he finds it. See him preparing an expurgated edition of the sacred Scriptures, for the instruction of his flock. He is reading on, chapter after chapter, pen in hand. The pages already passed over are everywhere thickly blackened with erasures. A large portion of the Pentateuch is gone, — Joshua and the Judges, sad reminiscences of a barbarian age, have been almost entirely expunged. Ecclesiastes, and the Song of songs have totally disappeared. The fire of rationalistic criticism has passed through the Psalms, and the prophecies; and only here and there a flower, or a solitary cedar of Lebanon, remains unscathed. Our lettered Vandal at length approaches the New Testament. "The land is as the garden of Eden before him, and behind him a desolate wilderness, and nothing shall escape him." He hesitates a moment, for a voice says: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." But having girded himself to the work he boldly expunges the whole of the first chapter of Matthew at a stroke. We will not attend him further in his sacrilegious undertaking. But look on while he distributes the mutilated Bible, thus blackened by his merciless criticisms, among his congregation. With what consternation do the godly and unsophisticated receive it! "The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground, and keep silence; they have cast up dust upon their heads, they have girded themselves with sackcloth; the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground."

Digitized by Google

But why this lamentation? The doctrines are there; the precepts are there; the promises are there. True, he has spared, we will imagine, the general system of Christianity. But what sufficient reason can he give for saving the portions retained? Why preserve the passage, "Come unto me, all ye that labor," — or the text, "Depart ye cursed"? Because, as he must answer, they accord with my feelings, and my ideas of truth! They harmonize with the inspirations of which I am inwardly conscious!

But will the depraved heart of an impenitent sinner stop here? By no means, while a single arrow of divine wrath is aimed against it. Passages which teach the necessity of regeneration, and the doctrine of eternal punishment, are at variance with *his* feelings, and *his* consciousness of truth. He therefore rejects the doctrines, "Ye must be born again," and "He that believeth not shall be damned," — on the same principle whereby his minister rejects the book of Job, and the miraculous conception of Christ.

Nor will any two ministers, or any two hearers, agree as to what portions of the Bible shall be deemed worthy of credence, as divine, and what portions shall be thrown away. Each will receive what is agreeable to himself, and reject the rest. Each blotting out what he does not like, as Whitfield used to say, nothing will be left but the covers.

Let us be instructed on this subject by recent history. When the Unitarians rejected the Bible as of plenary authority, they set themselves afloat upon a sea of doubt and speculation. We doubt not that they would have recoiled with horror from that form of infidelity which some of their followers have logically deduced from their leading principles. They loved the Christianity which they retained, and strove to defend it. They might even have suffered martyrdom for it. But where was this Christianity to be found? It was contained, they said, in the New Testament. But where? Not in the first of Matthew, for the account of the miraculous conception was monstrous; not in the last of Matthew, for the baptismal formula implied a doctrine contrary to reason. No one book, or one chapter, could be selected as certainly containing the unadulterated gospel of Christ. Hence, as it has often pained us to observe, in conversing with educated Unitarians, they never seemed to feel the force of an argument drawn from the Word of God, in regard to any disputed doctrine. No point

Digitized by Google

could be settled with them by a "Thus saith the Lord." The same incredulity which caused certain leaders of this denomination to reject the miracle of the swine choked in the sea, emboldened a new race of theologasters, following out the principles of their religious guides, to reject the doctrine of our Saviour's resurrection from the dead, and the whole system of Christianity as a supernatural revelation. This result was just what might have been anticipated by any one duly considering the natural sequence of cause and effect. Bald deism or pantheism, with or without the Christian name, is but the natural termination of that downward movement, which begins in rationalism as applied to the Bible.

Many have already gone this length. They have made shipwreck of faith and salvation. Standing, as some of them do, in the high places of the Christian scribe, publishing sentiments so congenial to the natural heart, which ever murmurs against religious restraints, they have sown the seeds of infidelity among the rising generation; and already the predicted harvest of unbelief, crime, and dissipation, is springing up. Let it once be understood, that the Bible is of no more authority than our own inspirations, that man has nothing to fear in the commission of evil, beyond what his own blinded conscience threatens, — and the great barriers against iniquity being thus thrown down, abominable ungodliness will rush in and usurp the place of Christianity in the world.

Dare we then, as orthodox ministers and disciples of Christ, license and set apart men as pilots of salvation, who, as we have reason to fear, will take out their congregations into those dark streams of infidelity which have swept down so many immortal minds into the frightful gulf of pantheism and destruction? We speak from our confidence in the soundness of the orthodox churches, when we say, that they will never do it. Betrayed by haste, or the urgency of circumstances, a majority of an association or of an ecclesiastical council, may inadvertently aid in putting a sceptical candidate into the ministry. But the time is distant, we hope eternally distant, when the right hand of fellowship will be intelligently and deliberately given to any candidate for the sacred office, who denies the supreme authority of the sacred Scriptures.

Digitized by Google

THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER'S SKETCH OF THE PISCATAQUA ASSOCIATION.*

We are strongly impressed by this article, with the convenience of a modern distinction between *facts that are true* and *facts that are not true.* It would have aided us materially in the examination of this piece of history, if the writer had designated by appropriate marks which of the facts here published to the world belong to one of these classes, and which to the other. The avowed purpose of the sketch itself seems to need greatly some such indication of its real character. It aims, indeed, to be a commendatory monument of departed worth. The writer intended, he assures us, "to recall the memory of a cluster of distinguished and venerable men," who, as an association of ministers, in his judgment, had not their equals in "any similar association in the country." If we had no other means of information than the sketch furnishes, we should either forget the purpose of the writer, or suppose that he had slidden from history into fable, from facts into fiction. We should judge that if he meant his narrative to be understood literally, he required belief in inverse proportion to evidence, and that he shewed what a remarkable body of Christian ministers, the association he describes, were, by facts that shew, chiefly, to what extent they were not Christian ministers at all.

One of the "distinguished men," "of whose worth and services he would make some inadequate record, before the generation that knew them has wholly passed away," is distinguished for "a lame oratory;" for having inherited the means to pay for the printing of his half-century sermon, which made to the world the astonishing revelation that he could write well; and for casting the only "Federalist vote," in his town for a long series of years.

* In the Christian Examiner for May last, No. CXLVII., there is an article entitled, "Art. VI. The Piscataqua Association of Ministers." It has the signature "A. P. P.," said to be the initials, of Rev. A. P. Peabody, of Portsmouth, N. H. The present article was prepared at the request of the Piscataqua Association, and by their advice is sent to us for publication by one of its members, who is responsible for its contents. Without being in a situation to judge of the facts ourselves, we deem it proper to permit this highly respectable body to vindicate itself, its churches, and the memory of its fathers.

Digitized by Google

Another of the ministers in this group, is said to have made "the apostolic calling of a fisherman something more than a pastime;" — so much more, that his gains from this source surpassed those of any individual in his parish. He was, in one sense at least, an example to the flock. If he was not "a student or an accomplished writer," he was a good fisherman. If he gave the week to "a life on the ocean wave," he did not neglect to give Saturday evening to the unrelished task of preparing for the pulpit; and such was the zeal with which he studied on that night for the welfare of his flock, that "he often outsat his family a whole hour!"

Another of the circle makes himself an example to the flock, by evoking treasures from the earth, not from the sea. Much is said of his success, in raising, and in teaching others to raise, vegetables for the Portsmouth market. One would suppose, from the description, that he meant to give practical illustrations of Flavel's "Husbandry Spiritualized." The glowing description of his labors would lead us to infer that the town of Elliot must have become an agricultural paradise, where no rocks encumber the soil, no weeds grow, no unreclaimed bog meets the eye; where "taste and revenue" are duly cultivated, all through the influence of a single minister. At his coming, the town was the very picture of desolation, possessing "not a garden, or a well tilled farm." Its inhabitants were "poor, indolent, and thriftless," "and during a large portion of the year, lounged, slept, or drank the hours away." But a minister, at last, made his appearance, who was to transform the wilderness into a fruitful field. The process of raising vegetables for the Portsmouth market was the talismanic spell by which the magic transformation was effected. At his coming, laziness, poverty, and unthriftness all vanish. Cabbages and potatoes, being raised and turned into cash, ameliorate the condition of Elliot with astonishing speed. They accomplish what no ministration of the gospel had previously accomplished. Elliot rises from barbarism to refinement, from indolence to thrift, from poverty to wealth. Look to Elliot, ye revilers of the ministry, and see how surpassingly useful a pastor may be, when he "allures," if not "to brighter worlds," at least to better markets, "and leads the way." But we forget, our historian did not aim to caricature the Christian ministry; he was in sober earnest, while giving his sketch of the remarkable usefulness of

Digitized by Google

Mr. Chandler's life. It is not hinted, however, where fiction and fact blend their lines in the sketch. We are told, indeed, that the pastor of Elliot did not neglect the cure of souls; but we are not told, as we might have been, that his house has been crowded during the interval of public worship, with persons who came to ask their pastor what they must do to be saved. Did we not know from other sources that Mr. Chandler was useful *as a Christian minister*, we should look in vain for the information here. We are told also of the intellectual and religious character, to which the people of Elliot were raised by his agency. Of their intellectual improvement we have curious proof in the recorded fact, that the women, by the gallant chivalry of their lords, are deputed to bear the wonder-working vegetables to Portsmouth, "officiating as their own *oarsmen*," as they glide down the arrowy Piscataqua. Surely where calisthenic exercises so appropriate to the sex have been successfully introduced, society must have risen high in the scale of improvement. If the historian had witnessed, as we have happened to, the very sparkling ebullition of no hallowed spirit excited among these *oarsmen*, these improved "merwomen," by this very sketch of their history, he would have had an odd sample of the religious elevation of Elliot.

Another of the former members of this Association is commended for various qualities, but not at all for one which he would have deemed his crowning excellence, — his ability as a preacher of those doctrines which the author of this sketch dislikes so strongly. He is praised as a patron of education, as a wise dispenser of counsel, as a shrewd disputant, and especially for his skill in the performance of impossibilities; — as a proof of which, "he reared a family of sixteen children, maintained in full the external proprieties of his station in dress and house-keeping, and exercised an unstinted hospitality," with a salary of three hundred dollars and the restricted fields of a parsonage. But it is not said, with what faithfulness and power he proclaimed those doctrines of Christianity which we look for in vain in the pages of the Christian Examiner. If the writer could not find evidence of Dr. McClintock's power as a preacher of Christian truth in the few manuscript sermons which, he assures us, are the only remains of the kind that have been preserved, we could have shewn him ten more, which evince that the preacher deserved far higher commendation than he has here received.

Digitized by Google

Another of the ministers mentioned in the sketch, and one who towered above the whole number in intellectual stature, is described with a most depreciating brevity in two sentences. He was not expert as a fisherman, or as a cultivator of cabbages, otherwise he might have been creditably mentioned. As a faithful pastor, an able preacher of Christian truth, and a scholar worthy to fill the presidential chair of Bowdoin College, Dr. Appleton deserved much more than the faint notice he has here received. It had been better not to mention him at all, than to slur him over by a faint description; while his inferiors are sketched with a bold outline, and in high colors.

Of the celebrated Dr. Belknap, we learn that he was starved out of Dover.

The minister of Hampton Falls is remembered, says our historian, in the town where he lived, as a remarkably dull preacher. And it is mentioned as a traditionary "myth," * in commemoration of him, that "while he administered an evangelical opiate of unusual efficacy, he succumbed himself to its power, and sank in gentle slumber on the pulpit cushion."

Thus the writer proclaims to the world, in strains of attempted eulogy, "the worth and services" of an association of ministers! Should the shades of those venerable men return to earth, they would find in the ill-proportioned delineation, no flattering portrait of themselves. Their wonder would be, whether the pencil of a friend, or that of a foe, drew the outline. If they were Christian ministers, why are they commended most earnestly for doing what is not enjoined in their commission? If they were not Christian ministers, why were they brought to our notice as such? But the writer claims that he is honoring the fathers of the Piscataqua Association, as a friend. Were he to describe the apostle Paul chiefly as an expert tent-maker, or the apostle Peter chiefly as a good fisherman, would he do justice to their character? Would his sketch be received as that of a friend? If it be the part of friendship thus to eulogize departed worth, those

* The writer, who is said to be the Rev. A. P. Peabody, says, in a discourse before the Divinity School at Cambridge, of *myths*, "that word is, as every sciolist knows, simply an euphemism for *falsehood*." If, then, the writer has not changed his views on this point since 1845, we know how to understand the "myth" respecting Mr. Wingate. A *falsehood* is here related in honor of departed worth!

Digitized by Google

who are in danger of suffering the infliction ought to pray, "Deliver us from our friends!"

We should like to know, also, whether the following alleged facts are facts that are true. Were the inhabitants of Elliot as lazy and thriftless before the golden age of Mr. Chandler's ministry as they are said to have been? Were Mr. Litchfield and Mr. Chandler rejecters of the Trinity? Were "the reputed heretics set aside by the self-styled orthodox?" Are there none living who heard Mr. Wingate preach? Are there, or have there been, ministers in the Piscataqua Association, among whom "no indulgence is shewn to an honest difference of opinion, and a Procrustean creed is made the only standard of piety?"

Have the churches of the Association dwindled away in the manner and to the extent here described? Excepting the parishes in Portsmouth, Dover, and Exeter, do they retain only "a spasmodic and flickering vitality?" Do any of them "number as many pastors as years?" If the writer knows that some of the parishes "are utterly extinct, the old spires still towering over churches that have become shattered and untenantable ruins," will he designate their locality? *One* such spire we have seen, where the minister who enriched himself by fishing preached. Does he refer to this solitary case by an editorial plural? Or are we to consider the inclusion of others as only a *myth*, or one of the facts that are not true?

So much for the facts of the historian; we come now to his philosophy.

Not content with a sinister portraiture of the ancient Association, our writer entertains the reader with a lugubrious account of the present state of religion in what was the sphere of the ministers whom he describes. He supposes the spiritual paradise to have relapsed into a moral wilderness, and he philosophizes upon the change with a tact worthy of his veritable history of facts. The religious declension he traces directly to the luckless Calvinists, who, when some of these ministers changed their sentiments and became Unitarians, simply retained their original faith. He makes this pertinacity responsible for the degeneracy of the churches. It was not, it seems, because the seceding Unitarians preached earnestly against the doctrines of their former associates, and by their relaxed theology unbound the restraints which held men's passions in check, that religion

Digitized by Google

declined. It was because the more steadfast of the ministers vindicated their cherished belief from illiberal aspersions, and continued to preach the Gospel, that impiety grew apace! Such we understand to be the philosophic explanation of all the vice and impiety in Portsmouth and the vicinity. "So long," it is said, "as the exclusive spirit was held in check, and the influence of the united body of pastors was felt in every flock, most of these parishes remained undivided and prosperous. But so soon as the brotherhood was broken, and the reputed heretics were set aside by the self-styled orthodox, marks of decline and decay became visible throughout the whole region."

Had the Trinitarian ministers in the Piscataqua Association only recognized as of a kindred faith, those who, like our historian, repudiate their leading tenets, and are even "warmly opposed" to them; had they only falsified facts by admitting that contradictory views of the great doctrines of Christianity were equally correct; had they striven to retain, in a nominal fellowship, those who were so averse to their theology that they went out from them; then, we may infer, the state of things would have improved, not deteriorated. If, since Unitarianism came forth into the light, ministers who stood on opposite sides of the dividing line, had lovingly agreed to hold each other as brethren of the same faith, — one class not charging the other with sheer idolatry in worshipping the Son of God, the other not charging its opponents with tearing from the Redeemer's brow the diadem of his divinity, — all would have been well. Religion would not then have sunk to a low ebb, and we may venture to suppose that no Unitarian pastor would have had occasion to hint to his flock, at a time when other denominations enjoyed a revival of religion, that they were "*as an island of ice in a sea of fire.*" And, according to our historian's philosophy, it may be refreshing to him to reflect how greatly the spiritual welfare of these parishes would have been advanced, if, when some of the old association renounced their former faith, all had apostatized in like manner. Then the interests of religion must have triumphed! Then the unrippled uniformity of the clergy in faith and practice must have charmed many into the ways of goodness! And, if some, in their mutations, should have proceeded as far on the Unitarian side as Theodore Parker has done, and should have promulgated the very dogmas of a coarse skepticism, veiling their odious form in smooth and

Digitized by Google

polished diction, still we must not doubt that religion would flourish; for then, there would be no orthodox exclusiveness to disturb the stagnation of Unitarian agreement. No matter how deeply drugged with error may be the atmosphere of Unitarianism, it must give vitality to religion, while the atmosphere of a Trinitarian theology can nourish only irreligion!

It is said to be a custom in a small kingdom in the island of Celebes, that when the king happens to fall from his horse, all around him must fall from their horses, with due deference to royal example! So, it may have seemed to our writer rather essential, that when some of the ministers of the Piscataqua Association fell from the truth into Unitarian errors, all the ministers should have fallen likewise. The beautiful unanimity thus shewn to the world would have prevented religious declension!

There is another bearing of this explanation which may have been overlooked by the writer. The source of prevalent irreligion, it seems, is the unwillingness of ministers to favor Unitarian views by treating them as Christian truth. Those who cannot conscientiously sympathize with this form of sectarianism, who claim the right to keep aloof from what they honestly think an unchristian theology, are charged with making a Procrustean creed the only standard of piety. The liberty of dissent has been claimed in the ranks of the Unitarians themselves. Mr. Parker does not entertain as favorable an opinion as he once did of the doctrines of this sect. In his judgment, they have become antiquated, and the world requires something better in their stead. How shall the dissenter be treated? Shall he still be retained as a loving brother, or set aside from Unitarian fellowship? Some of his former brethren, if we have been rightly informed, have no fellowship with him, do not admit his doctrines to be true, do not welcome him to their pulpits. They are becoming, then, just as exclusive as they condemn Trinitarians for having become. Our writer, in his sermon before the Divinity School at Cambridge, justifies exclusiveness on the part of those Unitarians who dissent from Mr. Parker and his school. We could well quote some of his argument in favor of non-intercourse between ministers who differ as widely as Trinitarians and Unitarians do. But we leave him to explain as he can his own consistency, in defending manfully in 1845, what he condemns bitterly in 1848. We have to do now only with the fact that

Digitized by Google

some Unitarians have withdrawn from fellowship with others whom they once recognized as of a kindred faith. Is there no ground to fear that the state of religion must suffer extensively from this cause? In the neighborhood of Portsmouth, our historian found that religious declension was traced only to a similar cause. If like causes produce like effects, we may look for a deplorable state of impiety ere long in Boston and its vicinity. Some future philosopher may point the world to the sources of this coming blight, and say, in our writer's own words: "So long as the exclusive spirit was held in check, and the influence of the united body of pastors was felt in every flock, most of these parishes remained undivided and prosperous. But so soon as the brotherhood was broken, and the reputed heretics were set aside by the self-styled orthodox (Unitarians), marks of decline and decay became visible throughout the whole region."

The Piscataqua Association still flourishes, the alleged facts of the Christian Examiner to the contrary notwithstanding. Changes do indeed take place in its ministry. Some churches have given up their pastors to fill more important stations. Several living ministers once connected with this body have officiated as pastors of churches in some of our principal cities. One of the present members of the Association has resigned to a colleague the active supervision of a church over which he has presided for more than thirty years. Another is still the pastor of a thriving flock, over which he was ordained, probably, before the writer of the article so derogatory to the Association was born.* Some of the old spires we have seen standing over untenantable churches, but it was after convenient modern edifices had risen in their stead. We have known the single old building, in one instance at least, to be superseded by two new ones. We never supposed that to evacuate a decaying sanctuary, and to worship in a new one of superior construction, was a proof of parochial degeneracy. Had the writer collected facts as industriously as he has gathered up mistakes, he could have informed the public, that, within some twelve years, about eight places of worship in the limits of this Association

* This venerable father in the ministry is preparing a history of these churches and their ministers, which will go far toward refuting the erroneous statements, quite as numerous as those which are correct, in the Examiner's article.

Digitized by Google

have been built anew; and a similar number have undergone extensive repairs, some having been thoroughly, and at great expense, remodelled. The number of ministers in the Association, is twenty-nine; that of churches, twenty-eight; that of church members, two thousand seven hundred and fifty-three.

We conclude by expressing our deep regret that the Piscataqua Association, and the parishes connected with it, should have been thus incorrectly held up to public opprobrium. Is it consistent with a self-styled liberal Christianity, to heap unfounded calumny upon ministers and churches? Is it kind, is it just, is it honest, is it Christian, to hold up to reproach as the responsible procurers of all the existing irreligion, ministers whose only alleged misconduct is the want of sympathy with Unitarianism? Is it consistent with the boasted candor and charity of the denomination to which the writer belongs, to represent, as at the very last gasp of existence, churches as flourishing as those connected with this Association? The facts of the case were within his reach. Why, then, has he amused the public with a pretended history, filled with mistakes and fictions? May no Unitarian churches receive such usage at the hand of any Trinitarian minister.

HARRISON W. ELLIS.

Harrison W. Ellis, or, as he was until recently called, Ellis, was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, in the year 1808. His wife, Celia, was born about two years before him, in the same county and neighborhood. They knew each other from their childhood, and even then felt and expressed a special attachment for each other. When she was about sixteen years old, she was taken, with the family to which she belonged, to Tennessee. Ellis was much distressed at this, as he supposed that he would never see her again. In a few years, however, Ellis himself was taken to Tennessee; and, as he remarked with great emotion, Providence so ordered events, that he found himself again in the same neighborhood with her for whom the separation had in no degree abated his affection. Their acquaintance was renewed, and, being now of suitable age, they were soon married.

Digitized by Google

Before Ellis left Virginia, and before he was fifteen years old, he had learned to read. The first desire of this, which he recollects, was excited by observing, when he attended preaching, that the minister read from the Bible, and referred to it, as being the Word of God. He resolved that he would learn to read that book for himself. Celia, to whom he was then attached, being already able to read with some degree of readiness, encouraged his exertions.

It is common for servants to line the inside walls of their cabins with paper of any kind they can procure. Newspapers are frequently used for this purpose. The large letters at the head of one of these served as the book from which Ellis obtained a knowledge of the alphabet. The names of the letters he learned from the children of the white family, or from other servants who could read. Not having at first a complete alphabet, he combined the letters before him into as many words as he could, made himself thereby thoroughly acquainted with the powers of these letters; and, as he expressed it, did "what might be called a sort of reading before he knew the whole of the alphabet." He persevered in his efforts, obtaining such assistance as casually offered itself, until he was able to read the Bible and the hymn-book with ease and satisfaction.

It was either a short time before he left Virginia, or soon after his removal to Tennessee, that, by his own request, he was put to the trade of a blacksmith. His work in this line, being almost exclusively such as is needed on the plantations of the country, Ellis had no opportunity of becoming an accomplished mechanic, in the highest sense of the term. In the kind of work which he had to do, he was skilful, and after he had acquired the art of writing and some use of figures, on this account, as well as on account of his perfect trust-worthiness, he was regarded as an uncommonly valuable servant.

Owing to the death of his master, Ellis found himself in danger of being separated from his wife; and fearing that he might fall into the hands of a man then about to remove to the State of Missouri, and who was anxious to purchase Ellis because of his value as a smith, he applied to the master of his wife for his consent that she might be sold with him, provided he could find a purchaser for both. Obtaining the consent of Celia's master, which was given solely for the purpose of preventing a separation

Digitized by Google

of the two, he not being able to purchase Ellis, the latter went to a slave-trader, who kept his head-quarters at Nashville, and requested him to buy himself and wife, — detailing to him the circumstances of the case, and appending but one condition, which was, that wherever they might be taken, the family should be sold together. The man seemed surprised at the request, remarking that it "was the first of the kind ever made to him, and that the negroes always objected to being sold to him; but that since Ellis had placed so much confidence in him, he would buy the family, and would pledge himself that they should not be separated by any act of his." The man not only kept his word in every particular, but treated Ellis with marked kindness, and made him some handsome presents.

Ellis, his wife, and one child, (all they then had,) were now brought into the State of Mississippi, and sold to a clergyman of the Baptist church. Nothing remarkable occurred during his residence in Mississippi, which was for a short period only; for his master dying soon after he went there, and the estate being greatly involved in debt, Ellis and family came into the possession of one of the creditors, who immediately brought or sent them into Greene County, in the State of Alabama.

Ellis was now between twenty-five and thirty years old, for the precise year of this last removal is not recollected. He could do little, if any thing, more than read, and had evinced no special concern on the subject of religion. Important changes were, however, soon to occur in his character. He commenced a regular attendance on the preaching of the gospel at Hebron church, which was then under the charge of Rev. Joseph B. Adams, who felt a special interest in his welfare, and continued, as long as he had the opportunity, to afford him many facilities for improving his mind and heart. In a short time after Ellis commenced attending preaching at Hebron, he was brought to feel his need of an interest in the blood of Christ. His conviction of sin was deep and thorough. The distress of mind resulting from it continued for weeks without alleviation. At times he was overwhelmed, being driven to the verge of despair, through an apprehension that he had committed the unpardonable sin. One day, having taken a vessel to bring water from a spring near his shop, he was arrested on his return by a strong impression seizing upon his mind, that the moment had come when he must make his

Digitized by Google

peace with God, or be forever lost. In the agony of his spirit, he dropped the vessel of water, and threw himself prostrate on the ground. There he lay for some minutes, wrestling with the darkness and horror of his soul, and struggling as it seemed in vain, for strength to call upon God for help. Suddenly, as if announced by a voice from heaven, the declaration of the Apostle occurred to his mind: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." It was a familiar text to him, but never before had he understood it. Now it was just what he needed, and all that he could desire. He arose, looked around him, and thought he had entered a new world. He looked above, and saw light, surpassing that of the mid-day sun, beaming on his soul; and, as for a moment he conceived, pouring its effulgence upon his eyes. All the exercises of his mind while under the gracious operations of the Spirit leading him through the entire process of conversion unto God, were strongly marked, as they almost invariably are in cases of genuine conversion among those of his race in our country. Yet of enthusiasm, in any unfavorable sense of the term, Ellis has as little in character and conduct as almost any man.

Having, as he hoped, obtained the pardon of his sins through the blood of Christ, Ellis resolved to present himself as a candidate for admission to the privileges of the Church; and preferring, so far as he understood them, the Presbyterian doctrine and order, he resolved to offer himself to the Church of Hebron. In this matter, however, he apprehended serious difficulties. His master was an avowed infidel, an open scoffer at all religion, and a special reviler of the Presbyterian Church. Without forbidding him to do so, he had frequently endeavored to excite in the mind of Ellis such prejudices against the Church as might induce him to cease attending it. When, therefore, Ellis approached his master, it was with the full expectation of encountering not only a positive denial, but also a torrent of oaths against himself, the Church, religion, and God. To his surprise, however, the consent of his master was given promptly, kindly, and without a word indicating an ill spirit. In thus opening the way for the enjoyment of the dearest privilege which his heart coveted, Ellis thought a direct interposition of Providence was most manifestly concerned. He spoke of it with great tenderness of heart.

Digitized by Google

It was now that Ellis felt a strong desire to become acquainted with the languages in which the Scriptures were originally written, particularly with the Greek. In his vicinity the Rev. F. H. Porter, now deceased, taught a flourishing classical school. Some of the pupils, in going to school and returning from it, passed by the door of his shop. From these he obtained some hints as to the proper method of studying the languages. A hint was all that he required. He obtained the use of a Latin Grammar, and studying this at such intervals of leisure as were afforded him without neglecting his work, and especially at night, he was soon prepared to undertake the earlier books in a course of Latin. Thenceforward he made regular progress, until he felt that he could commence the study of the Greek, in which he was no less resolute and successful.

His plans, however, were now again broken up by a recurrence of events which, with unusual frequency, had intervened in his life to disturb and embarrass him. His master dying, and leaving his estate in debt, Ellis was to be sold again. His great anxiety grew out of the possibility that he might be separated from his family. In speaking on this subject, he remarked, that he had no dread of falling into the hands of an unkind master, for he had belonged to several different men, and had never received the slightest punishment from any one; nor did he doubt his ability to give satisfaction to the most exacting master in the country. The laws of the State require that sales of property made by the administator of an estate for the payment of its debts, shall be by auction, after due public notice. It was an object of deep solicitude with Ellis to avoid this in his case, as it might expose him to the evil he so much dreaded, a separation from his family. But the administrator was unwilling to incur the responsibility of departing from the course prescribed by law. Twice were Ellis and his family advertised to be sold at public auction. In each case, by the death of the administrators successively, the sale was arrested. A third time, under a third administrator, the day was set, and the advertisements put out. But God had purposed that the dreaded evil should not fall upon His servant; and by His grace converting the soul of the man who had charge of the estate, gave him new views of his duty, and of the feelings becoming a Christian. The administrator assumed the responsibility of authorizing Ellis to seek a master for himself and family,

Digitized by Google

wherever he pleased. A purchaser was soon found for them at the price designated by the administrator, and Ellis was once more at ease. He was now removed about fifteen miles from his former residence, to the immediate vicinity of Eutaw, the county seat of Greene County. In some respects his change was adverse. His new owner, having two large plantations ten miles distant from each other, Ellis, as the smith for both, spent his time either at the one or the other, as his services might be demanded. Such frequent changes in his residence were necessarily unfavorable to his advancement in his studies. These disadvantages, however, appear to have had no effect, except to arouse his powers to more vigorous action. As he once remarked, in reply to some questions respecting the influence upon him of the many adverse circumstances of his life, he had never undertaken any enterprise in which he did not find many obstacles; and as he had never been deterred by a view of the difficulties in his way, from undertaking anything on which his heart was set, so he had never failed to accomplish his purposes, whatever obstacles lay in his path.

He continued his studies in the Latin and Greek languages, and also commenced the study of the Hebrew, so that he might be able to read the entire Bible in the original tongues. He made but little progress in the latter language at that time, owing to the want of books. Subsequently, when he had access to the necessary books, he resumed it. In the meantime, he carried on other studies, Arithmetic, Geography, and English Grammar; connecting with the whole a careful perusal of Dwight's Theology, and after this, Dick's Theology, and such other useful treatises on the doctrines of Christianity as fell in his way.

In this state of things his case was brought before the synods of Alabama and Mississippi, and it was resolved, if practicable, to purchase him and his family, with a view to his being sent as a missionary to Africa. The Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, had consented to take him under its charge; and Ellis himself declared his willingness to do anything, or go to any place, that might present the most favorable opportunities for advancing the kingdom of Christ. A work of this kind, undertaken by two bodies meeting only once in a year, and then in places remote from each other, and depending for their means

Digitized by Google

upon collections made in churches scattered over two large States, must almost of necessity advance slowly. More than three years elapsed from the time the scheme was resolved upon, until its completion. During this period, so trying from the uncertainty of its result, Ellis continued to work at his laborious occupation with the fidelity and cheerfulness which had always characterised him, and to prosecute his studies with increased energy, if that were possible. When addressed on the uncertainty as to the result of the efforts then made in his behalf, his reply in substance was invariably: "The whole matter is under the control of God. He will do what shall be for his own glory. I am content to remain as I am, or to go to Africa, as Providence shall ordain." He now devoted a still larger share of his attention to the Greek language, and resumed the study of the Hebrew. He also paid further attention to systematic Theology, adding to his studies the evidences of Christianity, moral philosophy, algebra, geometry and astronomy. It is not to be supposed that he was a proficient in these several branches of knowledge. But in each of them he made such progress as that he understood the more important principles, and the leading facts; so that in addition to the advantages of a general acquaintance with these subjects, he could at any time, extend his investigations as he might find opportunity.

If it should be asked how Ellis found time for carrying on all these studies, no reply can be given. It is certain that he was employed diligently in his shop, at all seasons, and in all kinds of weather. Ellis himself stated that he always kept a book in his hat or pocket, and whenever a moment of leisure occurred, his book was produced. But it could only be a *small* book he could thus carry about him, and it was always an old one; for he thought it wrong to spoil a new book by bringing it to such a place as a blacksmith's shop. The night afforded him the only opportunity for anything like regular study. This season Ellis appropriated to the improvement of his mind, allowing for sleep the modicum which he learned by experience was just sufficient in his own case for the purposes of nature, *which was about four hours*. He usually studied in the first part of the night; but if unfitted for study by fatigue or drowsiness, or otherwise interrupted in the early part, he rose before day in time to supply the loss. It is known to those who have visited the south, that the

Digitized by Google

forests abound with the pine tree; and that its wood, there called *light-wood*, is much used for the purposes of light, as well as fuel. Ellis always kept a stock of this at hand; and for his uses it was scarcely less convenient, though not so classical, as the "midnight oil." Time, however, he did find for study, and means also he had of some kind; for he studied much, and with great success. He is no *prodigy*, if that word has any distinct meaning, nor does his mind in its operations betray any extraordinary activity. Perhaps no man can be found, possessing an equal degree of intellectual power, who has less of what is sometimes called "smartness." He has never manifested any remarkable talent for one class of intellectual pursuits in preference to others. Though he has made more proficiency in the study of languages than in other branches of knowledge, his success in the efforts he made in other departments, shews that his proficiency in these would have been equally great, if circumstances had led him to devote the same attention to them. The feature in his mental constitution which was ever most striking, was its well-balanced powers. There was about him nothing startling, and nothing dazzling.

In August, 1846, the purchase of Ellis and all his family, consisting then of his wife, a son about fourteen, and a daughter about twelve years old, was consummated by the payment of two thousand five hundred dollars. In September, the Presbytery of Tuscaloosa received Ellis under its care, as a candidate for the ministry, and at the same meeting he was licensed as a probationer. He was examined in open Presbytery, and before quite a numerous assembly, as to his personal piety, and his views in seeking the ministry; in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages; in church history and government, natural and revealed theology; and also on some branches of natural science. It was an occasion of intense interest with all present. In every particular his examination was entirely satisfactory, and in some most gratifying. All were astonished and delighted with the clearness of his views as to the doctrines of the gospel, and his skill in bringing arguments, and applying Scripture to the support of his opinions. It was very observable throughout, that, while he had read with much care the views of other men, he had *thought* more than he had *read*, and hence his answers to the questions propounded on points of doctrine, bore the impress of originality.

Digitized by Google

He also read a sermon, on the subject of the "perseverance of the saints," which was published in the Presbyterian Herald, Louisville, Kentucky, and copied into other papers; and subsequently was printed in pamphlet form, at Richmond, Virginia, in 1847, during the sessions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

So well satisfied were the members of the Presbytery with Ellis's qualifications for the ministry, that they resolved without delay to ordain him to its full work; and in order that the members of the Synod of the State might witness the ceremony, and become personally acquainted with one to whom so much of interest attached, the Presbytery adjourned to meet during the sessions of the Synod, in the city of Wetumpka, the latter part of October. Ellis was directed to prepare a discourse as a part of his trials for ordination, from the passage which had proved as the life of his soul, when crushed to the earth under the weight of conscious guilt: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus is come into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

Again Ellis was called to undergo an examination in experimental religion, and his views in seeking the ministry, and in the ancient languages and theology. The Synod adjourned to allow the Presbytery time for the services, or rather that the Synod might witness them. The church in which they were held was crowded in every part by an assembly composed of every class, from the Governor of the State, (who evinced an intense interest, and expressed the most unqualified approbation on the occasion,) to as many of the blacks as could find space in the galleries, doors, and windows, for standing, seeing, or hearing. Ellis was evidently much abashed by the position in which he was placed; but so far as any opportunity for the expression of opinion was given, all were highly delighted with the exhibition he made of his talents, and attainments in knowledge. In reply to some inquiries as to his earlier efforts in the study of the languages, he incidentally remarked, that he had received some assistance in the Hebrew. The Rev. Mr. Stillman, who for two years preceding this time had been pastor of the church of which Ellis was a member, asked: "Who gave you the assistance of which you speak?" Ellis replied: "Mr. Stillman." That gentleman rejoined: "Why, I never gave you more than twenty minutes'

Digitized by Google

instruction." Ellis, with great modesty, remarked: "That was more than I received in anything else." It was evident from his manner in this conversation, that he thought twenty minutes of direct instruction was not only a great favor, but also quite enough for a learner! No one who knew the man, or saw him when making remarks of this kind, could suspect him of affectation, or covert boasting.

Under the head of theology, he was asked: "Whether man can merit salvation by anything he can do?" His answer was: "No; salvation is all of grace." He was then asked: "What is grace?" He sententiously replied: "Grace! that is what I call *something for nothing*." A fine definition of a free and gratuitous salvation!

His sermon on this occasion, though perhaps not so regular in its construction as the former one, was on the whole superior to it, as shewing greater freedom in the range of his thoughts, and bringing out more of his mental characteristics. Some of his thoughts, particularly on the sufficiency of the atonement, on which he dwelt at large, were very striking, at least for their freshness. Though it is doing great injustice to the remarks to quote them apart from their connection, a few will be repeated as nearly as may be, in his own words: "He who fed five thousand with a few loaves and fishes, could surely feed the whole world upon himself." "There is as little propriety in asking whether the atonement of Christ is sufficient for the whole world, as it would have been for an Israelite to inquire, whether the brazen serpent lifted up by Moses in the wilderness possessed virtue for the healing of all who were, or might be, bitten by the fiery serpents." Referring to the objections which Arminians raise to the Calvinistic view of the atonement, he remarked: "It is they who really deny the sufficiency of the atonement; for in their view, it is not sufficient to secure infallibly the salvation of even those to whom it is applied!"

The Rev. Dr. Howe, Professor in the Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina, was present and heard the sermon. With other commendatory remarks, he observed: "That his office led him to examine a great many sermons prepared by students, who had completed their course, as trial exercises for their Presbyteries; and that the major part of them were not equal to the sermon just read by the candidate now before us."

Digitized by Google

On the afternoon of the Sabbath, Ellis was set apart to the work of the gospel ministry with the laying on of hands of the Presbytery. The Rev. R. H. Chapman preached the sermon appointed for the occasion. The Rev. R. B. White, the moderator of Presbytery, presided, propounded the questions prescribed in the Form of Government, and made the ordination prayer. Each minister in turn gave the right hand of fellowship, with the customary words: "We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this ministry with us;" after which Rev. J. L. Kirkpatrick delivered the charge to the newly ordained minister. It is needless to remark that the whole scene was most solemn and impressive. It is rare that one so interesting is presented in this world.

Early in January of the next year, Ellis and his family repaired to New Orleans, accompanied by Mr. Stillman, his friend and former pastor. Before their departure from home, liberal donations were made to them by some churches and individuals around, of books, clothing, and other articles useful in their new home. These were increased in Mobile, through which they passed, and where they remained a day or two. There the colored people manifested a special interest in Ellis, and in the enterprise in which he was engaged; and made him and his family handsome presents, in token of their good will and approbation.

In New Orleans, Ellis's arrival excited quite a sensation. Crowds thronged to see him at his lodgings, and to hear him at the church where he preached. Whatever else was needed to complete his outfit for the voyage, and for housekeeping in Africa, was promptly supplied by the citizens of New Orleans. About the middle of January, Ellis and family embarked, on a vessel chartered by the Colonization Society, for Liberia, where they arrived after a short and pleasant passage.

Ellis, as instructed by the Board of Missions, remained in Monrovia while he and his family passed through the process of acclimation, and while preparations were made for establishing himself at some permanent station. In the meanwhile, the Presbyterian Church in Monrovia became vacant by the death of the pastor, and chose Ellis as his successor. He is now the pastor of that church. Notices have appeared in the public papers, of his officiating either as the regular or occasional

Digitized by Google

chaplain to the national Legislature of the Republic of Liberia. In all his communications to his friends in this country, he has expressed himself as highly pleased with his adopted country, nor can it be doubted that if God shall spare his life, he will prove an ornament and a blessing to his race.

In person, Ellis is about the medium height, of a robust constitution, with an expanded forehead. His color is that of the native African, somewhat mitigated by the climate in which he has lived, and yet pure of any hues which would indicate an admixture of alien blood.

His piety, from the time he first united with the church, has been characterized by great sobriety, unobtrusiveness, and uniformity. Such was his modesty and diffidence, and such his exalted conceptions of the qualifications necessary for a religious instructor, as well as of the order proper to be maintained in ecclesiastical matters, that it was always with difficulty that he could be induced to take any prominent part in religious services, beyond offering a prayer when called upon, or conducting a prayer-meeting in some retired place. Yet he felt a deep solicitude for the spiritual welfare of those of his class around him; and, in such ways as he thought compatible with his position in the church, he labored for their good.

Though Ellis had been a free-man for some months before he left this country, though he was a regularly ordained minister of the gospel, and had been the object of much public attention, his demeanor was unaltered to both of the two great classes of society, toward each of which his position was somewhat equivocal, and not a little embarrassing. His good sense as evinced in this particular, was as remarkable as any other circumstance in his history. A simple incident may illustrate what is here intended. A few days before he set out for New Orleans, on his way to his distant home, the writer of this, meeting him in the streets of the village where he resided, remarked to him in a tone of pleasantry, in relation to his dress, that it *was not very clerical.* Ellis replied: "But it is such as I have heretofore worn. I have other and more clerical clothes, which I shall put on when I am away from those who have known me heretofore. Until then, I have thought it prudent not to excite any notice by a change in my dress or appearance." The writer has yet to hear of either prejudice, suspicion, or criticism from any quarter, excited by

Digitized by Google

any word or act of Ellis's, either during the protracted trial to which his equanimity and patience were subjected while the scheme for his purchase was in progress, or in the whirl of agitating events, which, during the subsequent four months, occurred in rapid succession.

Another incident may be mentioned, as illustrating both a feature of his character, and the impression which he made upon others. A few days after he was licensed to preach the gospel, calling for a few hours at the house of the writer, an intelligent and fashionable lady of the place came in to see him. During the conversation which ensued, the writer mentioned to Ellis, that he had collected for him a number of books such as might be useful to him. Ellis, with tears in his eyes, and with a touching gentleness of tone, peculiarly his own, replied: "You must be aware how impossible it is for me to express my obligations for such a favor. The only return I can offer is, to make a good use of the books. This I will try to do." The lady before mentioned was so affected that she was obliged to give free vent to her tears; and on retiring, a short time after, she requested the writer, who had accompanied her to the door, to bring Ellis with him to take tea that evening with herself and family, remarking: "He shall sit at my table *as any other gentleman does.*" To allow this remark full weight, it should be remembered that it was made in the southern country, and by a southern lady of great family pride, and not under the influence of religion.

Incidents like the foregoing might be multiplied, and much else said of Ellis. Perhaps the writer has already indulged himself too far in his desire to present a fair exhibition of the character of this remarkable man. He has, however, confined himself, in his statement of facts and incidents, to what he witnessed himself, or received *directly* from Ellis. Many reports are afloat with reference to Ellis, and some have appeared in the public papers, both secular and religious. A part of them the writer knows to be fabulous, and of others he has no means of ascertaining whether or not they are correct. There is enough which may be relied upon, to present a noble and cheering example of perseverance in the face of the greatest impediments and difficulties; — enough to evince the power of religion to develop the understanding and quicken its powers, as well as to renovate the heart.

Digitized by Google

OUR NEW TERRITORIES.

WITHIN less than four years, Texas has been annexed to our Union; the whole of Oregon south of the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, has been secured to us against foreign claimants; while New Mexico and California have been acquired by treaty after conquest. These territories taken together, says the President, in his late Message to Congress, "constitute a country more than half as large as all that which was held by the United States before their acquisition. If Oregon be excluded from the estimate, there will still remain within the limits of Texas, New Mexico and California," "an addition equal to more than one-third of all the territory owned by the United States before their acquisition; and including Oregon, nearly as great an extent of territory as the whole of Europe, Russia only excepted. Mississippi, so lately the frontier of our country, is now only its centre. With the addition of the late acquisitions, the United States are now estimated to be nearly as large as the whole of Europe." These estimates, being based on a report of the Commissioner of the General Land Office, are undoubtedly correct. It is also stated on official authority, and corroborated by other authentic information, that according to careful surveys, we have acquired on the Gulf of Mexico and on the Pacific, without taking into consideration the indentures and irregularities occasioned by promontories, capes, and bays, a sea-coast not less than two thousand miles in extent. The length of the Atlantic coast, from the northern extremity of the United States to the eastern boundary of Texas, is estimated at about three thousand miles. So that our newly acquired sea-coast, including Oregon, is, to what we possessed before as two to three, the former thus being two-thirds as great as the latter, and two-fifths of the whole sea-coast within our limits.

How rapidly has the line of civilization moved Westward! We can remember when the emigrants to Ohio, who used to pass through our native village, in their large covered wagons, with their families, seemed to us about to expatriate themselves forever; and were esteemed by many of our fellow-townsmen as rash adventurers, who, if they should not perish in their long march through the wilderness, must probably die from exposure and want, or by

Digitized by Google

savage violence, soon after they reached their destination. Now, Ohio seems to us almost as a next-door neighbor; and Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Iowa are no longer in the *far* West. It appeared for a time as if the Mississippi River, and the Indian Territory beyond, must be the utmost limits of the United States. When we used to read many years ago from Olney's Maps, in large letters, "AMERICAN DESERT," and in smaller type, "This desert is traversed by numerous herds of buffaloes and wild horses, and inhabited by roving tribes of Indians," and saw the immense country dotted over to represent sand and desolation, — and saw also the Rocky Mountains piled up beyond it, — we seemed to have come to the end; and could not dream, that a high-way might sometime be constructed across these dangerous wastes, and civilized commonwealths of our own, be founded in regions still more remote. But now we have vast territories, and the prospect of new states, west of these almost impassable mountains. While commerce was founding cities at the mouth of the Columbia, swarms of population have been pouring into Oregon through the northern and southern passes of that great wall, which nature seems to have erected for the division of empires.

New Mexico, though not as yet very thoroughly explored, has its mineral and agricultural attractions, and will, doubtless, be occupied in due time. It contains at present, according to Major Emery, about one hundred thousand inhabitants, chiefly Indians. But California is the region towards which all eyes are turned at this time; — California considered of so little consequence to us but a few years ago, that Mr. Olney, in preparing his School Atlas, covered over nearly the whole of that territory with "A TABLE, showing the distances from Washington to the Capital, or largest town, of each state." Most of this country remains yet unexplored. It consists, first, of what is called the great basin or valley, lying between the Rocky Mountains on the east, and the Sierra Nevada range on the west, forming an irregular ellipse, whose conjugate axis extends from east to west about five hundred miles. It is supposed, according to Colonel Fremont, to be from four thousand to five thousand feet above the level of the sea, to contain rivers and lakes which have no communication with the ocean, — unexplored deserts and oäses, — and though mostly uninhabited, to be partially possessed by tribes of savages, which "no traveller has seen or described." West of the

Digitized by Google

Sierra Nevada, between these mountains and another parallel range nearer the shore, called the coast-range, flows the Rio Sacramento in a southerly direction, and the Rio San Joaquin towards the north, both rivers emptying themselves in confluence into the bay of San Francisco. The beautiful valley lying between these mountain ranges, and watered by the Joaquin and Sacramento, taken in connection with the extended western slope of the Sierra comprises one of the finest countries in the world. A large portion of it, except in the very hottest season, is verdant the whole year round. The foot-hills of the Sierra declivity are said to be "sufficiently fertile and gentle to admit of good settlements." Though the highest summits of the Sierra, are naked, being little else but bald granite rock, covered in some places the whole year with snow, an abundance of the heaviest timber is found as you descend towards the west. "The cypress, pine, and cedar," says Fremont, "are between one hundred and two hundred and fifty feet high, and five to twelve feet in diameter with clean solid stems." In the country between the bays of San Francisco and Monterey, he found heavy forests, with many varieties of trees, some of them of extraordinary dimensions. In one instance, he measured a cypress which had attained to the enormous growth of fourteen feet in diameter. The shores of San Francisco are adapted to cities and commercial villages, while the bay itself furnishes one of the safest and best harbors in the world. But the great attraction to this country is found at present in its mineral riches. The newly discovered Havilah lies chiefly on the eastern side of the Sacramento and Joaquin, extending easterly to the mountains at least, and running hundreds of miles, no one knows as yet exactly how far, north and south.

This wonderful territory, almost hidden for ages from the available knowledge of civilized man, having come suddenly into possession of the United States, the rush of population to California is perhaps without a parallel in the history of our world. While multitudes are scaling the Rocky Mountains, old Cape Horn looks on amazed at the fleets which are passing round his stormy brow; and South America trembles, lest, to afford a passage to the multitude crossing to Panama, she should be severed by some new channel from her twin sister of the North, with whose destiny her own has been for unknown periods so inseparably connected.

Digitized by Google

We have nothing to say in this place of the means by which this territory has been acquired. Man must be held accountable for his acts, however valuable the consequences which may result from them. But God has higher purposes than we, and governments are but instruments in his hands. Within the last few hundred years, he has been pleased to open a new continent, a half a world to mankind. He has peopled the better portions of it with a peculiar race, and in a peculiar manner. Population flowed in gently at the first; now it comes in floods. It seems to be among the destinies of Providence, that the whole of North America and eventually of South America, and the Islands adjacent to our continent, both in the Pacific and the Atlantic seas, shall be peopled and inhabited mainly by the Anglo-Saxon race. The signs of the times have long pointed to this result, and every year adds to the probability that it will be realized. Nothing future of the kind can be more certain, in our opinion, than that states similar to our own, civilized, we hope Christianized, enjoying free institutions, and leavened more or less with the New England spirit, will eventually overspread the western continent.

In the meanwhile, changes of the highest importance to the welfare of man are rapidly going forward. There can hardly be a question that in a few years, a railroad will be completed from St. Louis over the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific; another across the Isthmus of Panama, and in all probability a ship-channel connecting the Gulf of Mexico with that of Tehuantepec. Thus our Western possessions will be brought nearer to our great eastern cities, for all purposes of maritime commerce, than they are at present, by a distance of from twelve to thirteen thousand miles. This will bring us also into near neighborhood to the old pagan world. Benighted China, with her uncounted millions of population, and Christianized America, if indeed, our new settlements shall be thoroughly Christianized, will lie, broadside and broadside over against each other, having the Sandwich Islands, already Christianized, between. Under these circumstances, the facilities for commerce between the Eastern States and the new commonwealths soon to spring up on our Western shores, and thus between this whole country and Asia, will produce, in time, a freedom of intercourse between the old world and the new, across the Pacific seas, which, connected with missionary zeal, must bring about great changes in the Asiatic nations,

Digitized by Google

and may not improbably revolutionize and bring them to Christ. We know not how things will terminate; but so far as we can now understand the designs of Providence, God seems about, in the striking language of the number of the "Home Missionary" for January, "TO MOVE FORWARD CHRISTENDOM ITSELF, and set it down over against pagan Asia, face to face, at the nearest point, where no pathless desert, or other obstacle shall intervene."

Much will depend, not only as respects the prospects of our own country, but those of the Asiatic world, on the character of the new states soon to be formed on our western shores. If these should be made up chiefly from the refuse of our own land, and the off-scourings of Europe, it might be better for us and mankind if California had been submerged beneath the ocean, before the battle of Buena Vista, than to have become connected with our Union. But if the new commonwealths should be so pervaded with the Puritan spirit, that Christian churches and schools shall be everywhere established, and cherished as essential to prosperity, and the open Bible be received as the Magna Charta of freedom and happiness among them, the millennial ages will bless God for his mighty works performed among us.

It is a pleasing feature in the California emigration, that so many of the vessels which have sailed from our Atlantic cities, have gone forth, recognizing great Christian principles as the basis of their prosperity. Among the thousands who are spreading themselves over the regions of gold, while there are many reckless adventurers, who were a moral nuisance at home, and may probably find the grave of the dissipated abroad, a fair proportion are supposed to be temperate, intelligent, and friends of good order, while some are members of our churches, and esteemed as young men of piety among us. We have been pleased and encouraged by the readiness with which many of these mining companies have entered into moral compacts with each other, and have sought to go forth under religious influences. Some have spared no pains to obtain good men who should act as chaplains on their long voyage, and preserve the sacred institutions of home. Many companies have solicited public addresses from our clergymen, and have also requested the prayers of Christian congregations with them and in their

Digitized by Google

behalf, on the eve of their setting forth for the opposite shores of our continent.

The Bible and the Tract societies deserve commendation for the spirit of enterprise and liberality with which they have supplied these adventurers with religious reading for their voyage; and the Home Missionary Society, for the means they have taken to begin the work of building up Christ's kingdom in that distant land.

The older states of our Union have great duties providentially assigned them, in reference to the territories newly acquired. They are henceforth to be part of ourselves. Involved in our destiny, we must prosper or perish together. What we do for that portion of our country which borders on the Pacific, must be commenced soon. A few years hence will be too late. We have long felt as if the work of christianizing the West was too mighty for us. But every year it increases on our hands. Providence delays not, out of consideration to our fears, our parsimony, our indisposition for severe labor, or our want of faith. One field after another is thrown open to us. God seems to say: Go in, and possess the land!

We need more of a self-sacrificing spirit. There must be more prayer to God, and larger conceptions of the grandeur of the Christian enterprise, and the importance of engaging in it with all the heart, and especially as concerns our own country, with the least possible delay. A year is now a century. Blessed are they who shall be found on trial equal to the great duties of their mission. Should we prove unfaithful, the prospects of the world, though darkened for a time, will not remain clouded forever. A bright day is coming. This is as certain as the promises of God. But if we dread and refuse the work assigned, a future generation, another race, may have the glory now offered to us. The words of Mordecai to Esther, may be applied to Christian America: "If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise from another place; but thou, and thy father's house, shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Digitized by Google

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

THERE are, at present, many indications in this city, of an unusual increase of religious feeling. It has not, however, reached that stage which we have been accustomed to designate as a revival of religion. There is still wanting, for instance, that feature of the special agency of the Spirit, which the Saviour placed first in the order of his influences: "When he is come, he will convince the world of sin!" We, indeed, hear men speaking of the importance of religion, and of increased attention to our spiritual interests. But we do not hear of men "pricked in their heart," as in the day of Pentecost, and crying out, each for himself: "Men and brethren, what must I do to be saved?" It is well, so far as it goes. But we must not regard this as constituting that high form of social blessings, for which our country has at times been distinguished.

In Isaiah's description of an approaching period of judgment upon his guilty nation, he makes this declaration: "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in *that day*." This description contains a principle which lies at the foundation of all God's works of mercy and of judgment. The dispute with man has chiefly been on this point, as to exaltation of the creature. Pride is the master-sin which God chiefly brands with the marks of his disapprobation; but which man chiefly cherishes, and least censures, especially in its manifestations toward God. Indifference to the glory of Jehovah, contempt of his Word, unwillingness to admit his testimony concerning our character, and reluctance to feel our littleness, intellectually, essentially, and morally, before Him, constitute the crimes of the most refined and exalted men and nations generally.

Many commend the Sermon on the Mount, and its Preacher, who would resist to the death its first benediction if put in the form of a precept. They profess to be willing to learn of him, but shrink from all that shews him to be "meek and lowly in heart." The Creator of men requires of us, as his right, a lowly reverence, which is not servile, but profound. "If I be a Father, where is my honor; and if I be a Master, where is my fear?" "For I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful

Digitized by Google

among the heathen." Nor has he reference only to his own rights, in this requirement. The perfection of human character and human society demands that humility, and that desire to give all glory and honor to the Most High, which He exacts. You say that a man is very defective, physically, who cannot distinguish colors or sounds. You require a sensibility to the beauties of nature and art in a perfect being; how much more, then, a sensibility which can feel the claims of moral worth to our esteem and respect; of station to our homage; of authority to our obedience! A child is deeply defective in character, who lacks these elements. No learning, no smartness, no accomplishments, can atone for the want of them. The father must be duly honored by the child, according to his parental relation, and his personal worth. And when that amounts to Infinity, there is no limit to the claim upon our homage, and the exaltation we should render, except that of our finite capacity. A family is in confusion where filial respect is wanting. Meekness, courtesy, reverence, confidence, love, the preferring one another in honor; these are the silent forces which gently balance the conflicting tendencies in a happy household, and sweetly guide the harmonious action of that little empire.

God will therefore be exalted by his creatures. And it will be either by judgment or mercy. In the days of Noah, the impiety of man had become bold, and defied the wrath of God. But the Lord was exalted by awful and righteous power in that dreadful day, in which he opened the windows of heaven, and sent the swelling billows to hunt out every rebel, and dash his greatness and his stoutness to the earth. Our globe hung darkling in the mid-heaven. The Lord had arisen in his wrath, to smite the earth. It was a day of judgment, of power, and of fierce indignation. The only man whose family was saved in that day, was an humble man, who feared God, believed him, and prepared an ark to the saving of his house. The Lord, and He alone, was exalted in that day. There were no more any found to set their mouth against the heavens. The loftiness of man was brought low. Almighty power then appeared, where every good being would ever see it, on the side of holiness. And there it is ever found, God ruling in might and in right. The precept of his law exhibits him ruling in righteousness. The penalty enforced exhibits him ruling in power. Acknowledge his right with your whole heart and life,

Digitized by Google

and God is at peace with you. Deny it, challenge him to maintain his claims, refuse to exalt him in the day of mercy; and he will be exalted in the day of wrath. Build your nest in Carmel, and he will bring you down from thence. Erect your tower to the heavens, to mock the fury of his roaring waves, if he should send them to chastise you, and he will write upon it, Babel; Pride's folly!

But God is now carrying forward the work of mercy, to which those works of judgment are to be but necessary interruptions, until the great day of judgment. And it is God's delight to gain the willing homage of his creatures. He is thus celebrated on one occasion: "Thou hast taken away all thy wrath; thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Now we conceive of a revival of religion as distinguished preëminently by this feature: "The loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord shall be exalted in that day." They that have been honoring idols of any kind will abandon them; they that have exalted reason, genius, wealth, political sagacity, military power, the popular will, forms of religion, ecclesiastical power, and they that have exalted themselves, will be brought low in their own estimation; and these, their idols, will be abased. All classes will "cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?" They will exalt the Father, as the God of an infinite majesty, as the Sovereign ruler of the universe, as "having mercy on whom He will have mercy," as "doing what He will with His own." They will honor the Son as Head over all things to his church, as God manifest in the flesh, as the Saviour able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto him, and whose blood cleanseth from all sin. They will honor the Holy Spirit as the promised Comforter, who renews the heart in the image of God.

A genuine revival of religion as a season of special divine interposition and mercy, will be that day, in which the Lord alone will be exalted. There will be, so far as the revival extends, no denial of the corruption of the human heart, of its pride and ungodliness, and no denial that we are "all by nature children of wrath." There will be a total renouncing of all dependence upon man's unaided power. It will be a season of deep and solemn

Digitized by Google

searching of heart to know wherein we have offended the Holy One of Israel. As described by one of the prophets: "Every man will mourn apart." It will be a season characterized by prayer, private and social, fervent, humble, and importunate. The Word of God will take a higher place, as more important in its instructions than any other writing, as infallible in all its teachings, as the very voice of God addressing each one of us personally. Men will not be "ashamed of Christ" in that day. They will "glory in the cross;" their boasting will be "in the Lord." It will be a season of devout praise, in which the attributes and works, the judgments and the grace, of God, shall draw forth the most fervent acknowledgments.

Whoever will take the pains to read with care the writings of every man employed by God in promoting the true revival of religion, will observe that he strongly aims at bringing men to a low estimate of themselves, of their moral excellences, their strength and wisdom. Nothing human is magnified. There is indeed an exceeding jealousy of all that tends to exalt man. This you see in all the old prophets; and their writings are eminently calculated to promote at least the first stages of such a work. You see it in Paul, who in his unrivalled eminence, labors to elevate men's thoughts and affections to God, and to abase every lofty imagination, and all confidence in the wisdom and power of man apart from Christ.

Humiliation is then our great and special duty at this time. This is a work to be effected by communing with our own hearts, by recalling our sinfulness, by meditating on the infinite majesty of our God and Saviour, by condescending to do anything which promises to promote religious feeling in others, by ceasing from man in every form of dependence which seems to diminish our sense of absolute and universal dependence on God. All sectarian pride should be abandoned. Not that we should yield our convictions of truth, and our fervent preference of it to error; but we should cherish meekness in estimating the differences between ourselves and others; and a dread of unsanctified motives in seeking the advancement of our sect. We must condescend to men of low estate, cordially and kindly, as Jesus did. We must set ourselves about it as a duty, to increase in ourselves and others every sentiment of reverence, godly fear, confidence, dependence, and thankfulness toward God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

ROGER WILLIAMS AND HIS BETTERS. — In our January number, we made an allusion to Williams and the Puritans, which has drawn upon us and our fathers an ireful effusion from our Baptist brethren of the Watchman and Reflector. In the first volume of this work, we played the part of an iconoclast, or idol-breaker, in demolishing the entire Baptistical image of Williams's life and opinions. That essay has never been answered, nor can it be confuted. Our fathers turned Mr. Williams out of doors, because he was tearing their house to pieces. For performing this necessary act of self-preservation, we leave them to be vindicated by John Quincy Adams, that foe of bigotry, and firm friend of civil and religious liberty. In a discourse published by him some six years since, after a candid statement of the facts, he asks: "Can we blame the founders of the Massachusetts Colony for banishing him from within their jurisdiction? In the annals of religious persecution, is there to be found a martyr more gently dealt with by those against whom he began the war of intolerance? whose authority he persisted, even after professions of penitence and submission, in defying, till deserted even by the wife of his bosom? and whose utmost severity of punishment upon him was only an order for his removal as a *nuisance* from among them?"

The principal claims set up for Williams by his one-sided glorifiers, are without foundation. It is claimed that he was the first to write in behalf of "soul-liberty," or freedom of conscience, and the first to give it full establishment in his colony. As to his tedious and prosy writings on this subject, it is certain that he was anticipated at least *thirty* years by certain Baptists in London, by Leonard Busher in 1614; and by Helwisse and others in 1615; and at least *thirty-five* years by Henry Jacob, one of the best and earliest fathers of modern Congregationalism. — And as for Williams's claims to be regarded as the first to establish entire religious liberty, it is enough to say, that this had already been done in Holland a quarter of a century before he was born. Lord Baltimore, a Papist, did the same thing, in his colony of Maryland, two years before the settlement of Providence Plantations; extending free toleration to *all* Christians, while Rhode Island refused it to Roman Catholics, and all persons not Christians, down to the year 1783. The Quakers made bitter complaints of Williams as a persecutor, and hated him as hatefully as they did John Norton, "the high-priest of Boston." Williams's colony was obliged to procure the help of Massachusetts in banishing the fanatical Gorton and his outlaws; obtaining an illegal extension, over their own territory, of the very laws by which Williams was then excluded from Massachusetts. This hard necessity of theirs, may amply excuse the like necessity on the part of "the people of the Bay."

The prevailing notion of Williams among our good Baptist friends seems to be this: namely, that Williams was banished chiefly for being a Baptist; that he went to Providence, and gathered the famous First Baptist Church there, which is the mother church of

Digitized by Google

all that numerous fraternity in America; and that he remained its pastor forty years, to the day of his death, and is therefore to be revered as the spiritual father of their denomination in this country. Now this whole notion is delusive. Williams was no sort of a Baptist, till he had been at Providence two or three years, when he was converted by Mrs. Scott, who soon after turned Quakeress; and who was sister of the noted Anne Hutchinson, that "she-wolf of Antinomianism." Williams then immersed eleven persons, one of whom returned the compliment upon him. But all of these in a very few months forsook the cause, and the best Baptist historians ascribe the formation of the Providence Church to a different set of men. Williams himself, *in about three months*, renounced his baptism; never after communed with the Baptists; seldom, if ever, worshipped with them; and always insisted that they had no true churches, no authorized ministry, and no valid sacraments!

Surely our esteemed brethren of the Watchman and Reflector must be sensible of a sad poverty of great souls in the early times of their denomination, when they are forced to set up Roger Williams as their patron-saint, and to "swear by his name" in all their allegations against the Puritans and their sons. *We* feel too much respect for the Baptist denomination, to place them under *such* a tutelary power.

MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.—The Seventeenth Annual Report of the Garrisonian party, has just made its appearance, together with an appended sketch of their last annual meeting. It has the old stereotyped boasts of the great success which has attended the stupendous efforts of this "mighty little" faction. It has been very successful indeed! It first *succeeded*, by its outrageous violence and folly, in making the good cause of emancipation disgustful to the best men both at the North and the South, and in retarding its success by a half a score of years at least. It next *succeeded*, by yet greater violence and folly, in reducing its once formidable numbers to a mere handful of visionaries and disorganizers, who were once detested, then laughed at, and are now pitied. And by thus reducing and degrading itself, it has further *succeeded*, in giving the cause of emancipation opportunity to come forward again in the strength of patriotism and philanthropy, and to do something effectual in the great struggles of freedom. This report is very severe upon the defunct Liberty Party, asserting that "its influence, as far as it has gone, has been evil, only evil, and that continually." Of the Free Soil Party, which has absorbed the Liberty Party, we are told, that it is an experiment, which in its present form must fail; that it is treasonable to the hopes, and "deserving to forfeit the trust, of the Anti-Slavery public;" and that it is not "an Anti-Slavery party in any proper sense of the term." More good news for Mr. Calhoun!—This Report is "not ashamed to speak evil of dignities," and "of the ruler of its people," and of the honored dead, in these scandalous terms: "God said unto Harrison, almost at the very moment he and his partizans were saying unto their souls, 'Eat and drink, for thou hast much goods laid up for many years,'—'*Thou fool*, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!'" Thus would William L. Garrison

Digitized by Google

and his well-known band of coadjutors, save their Maker the trouble of judging his creatures whom he has already summoned to his own bar; while they forget, that "whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Thou fool!' shall be in danger of hell-fire." — Among other atrocious slanders, so incredibly absurd that they carry their own confutation with them, these men affirm that the Rev. Dr. Parker, of Philadelphia, maintained in effect, at the last annual meeting of the A. B. C. F. M., "that the possession of slaves, far from being *prima facie* evidence of sin, was *prima facie* evidence of *holiness!*" — These same consistent non-resistants and ultra peacemen say, that they "spurn and spit upon" the doctrine that there ought to be any "forcible suppression of an attempt on the part of the slaves to vindicate their rights by an appeal to arms and the God of battles!" — It appears that Wendell Phillips defended the Churches against the assertions of poor Pillsbury, "and commended the energy, perseverance, and ability, with which they labored for the ends they sought." Though he would not regard them as Christian Churches, "he said they were enemies not to be thought of lightly, and Abolitionists might learn a useful lesson from them of dauntless and unwearied self-devotion." It is odd to find this unchristian crew passing resolutions defining what a true Christian Church should be. This is equal to a knot of gibbering fiends, in some corner of pandemonium, voting that no place ought to be regarded as a real heaven, where fire and brimstone are not the prevailing elements of bliss!

IMPRECATIONS AND INSPIRATION. — There is among us a somewhat numerous and noisy class of transcendental reformers, who have rather singular notions upon these two subjects. They deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, in great part on account of the imprecations in the Psalms. And yet, though they claim to be truly inspired themselves, they utter little else than imprecations on all who stand in their way. They breathe out nothing but wrath and cursing against the Sabbath, the Church, and the ministry, as well as against society, government, and law. They, seem, like Balaam, hired out to work at the cursing trade. They make a regular business of it in the Liberator, and "old organization" conventions, on all occasions. "Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips." So badly are they *habited* in this respect, "that they have clothed themselves with cursing like as with their garment." How inconsistent it is for these prophets and prophetesses, who claim to be filled with the most transcendent inspiration in the utterance of *their* imprecations, to deny the inspiration of David, because he sometimes denounced the just anger of God against the enemies of the Lord and His anointed, in this form of denunciation. One would think that they should have been thankful for any texts which might seem to keep them in countenance. A minister, a sort of kindred spirit with them, once complained, in an ecclesiastical assembly, of a new Psalm-book prepared for the use of its churches. He peevishly asked, what pieces, fit to be sung in his agitating conventicles, could be found in the book? The moderator of the Association

Digitized by Google

arose, and drily answered: "The imprecations! 'Break out their teeth, O God!' Is not that strong enough for you?" Surely, if men who pretend to be the very best and most finished Christians, have so much occasion for execrating all who do not run as wild as they do, they ought not to object to the Scriptural precedents which may be applied or perverted to their purpose.

HEBREW THEOCRACY. — A small volume on this important subject has been put forth by Rev. Dr. Cogswell of New Brunswick, N. J. But though this new-born book is very small of its age, it is evidently a dear little pet, beautifully dressed in the whitest of linen-stock, with double black lines neatly traced around every page. It is apparelled much like the famous "expunged resolutions" on the records of the United States Senate. It discusses the peculiar form of government in the Hebrew Commonwealth, wherein God himself was the Supreme Ruler; and it traces many resemblances between it and our republican constitution, as well as many resemblances between the Jewish history and that of our pilgrim-fathers. We give the following extract from a discussion of capital punishment as enjoined by the divine law: "It appears to be the fact that those most opposed to the execution of the cold-blooded murderer, have been most pleased with the slaughter of the Mexicans, and most disposed to justify it. They are not opposed to the death penalty, when it is viewed at a distance, and from which they feel secure. But the consciousness that they have hatred in their hearts, which may sometime lead them to commit murder, makes them anxious for the abolition of the proper penalty. The murderer who kills his neighbor, made in the image of God, would, if he had the power, murder God himself. The advocates of the abolition of capital punishment have the spirit of those, who said to Pilate, Release Barabbas and crucify Jesus. They had more sympathy for a murderer than for the Son of God."

JOURNAL OF THE PILGRIMS AT PLYMOUTH IN 1620. — A sort of *fac simile* of this precious and instructive relic, accompanied by a very copious Appendix of "Historical and Local Illustrations of Principles, Providences, and Persons," has been put forth by Dr. G. B. Cheever, of New York. He has evidently studied his subject with great labor and care, and he has treated it with all the force of his fine genius and fiery heart. It is truly an *exciting* book. In the proud Puseyite it will excite the utmost scorn and wrath; — in the pious Puritan, it will excite a glowing enthusiasm for those holy sufferers, who "filled up" so much of "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church." It was their rightful boast, that they had "planted their churches the nearest to the Bible, and the farthest from Rome, of any in the world." They counted not their lives dear unto them, that they might set up the Kingdom of Christ in its purity; for they knew that "when Christ reigns, then, and not till then, will the world be at rest."

Digitized by Google

PAMPHLETS. — Rev. Nathan Munroe, of Bradford, has published a lecture on the "Qualifications of the Teacher," delivered by him before the American Institute of Instruction at Bangor, in August last, and printed at the expense of that body. It is verily gratifying to find so much common sense in connection with a subject so tricked out with transcendental frippery, as the subject of education has been for several years. The lecture, which would seem to speak the mind of the Institute, earnestly insists that the teacher, as a prime qualification for his calling, should believe in the divine authority and inspiration of the Bible. — Rev. Mr. Whiting, of Lawrence, has published his sermon, preached at the dedication of his house of worship in the "new city." He is a man by himself, and so very unlike all other mortals, that he will never be guilty of the affectation of trying to write as common folks do. This sermon contains some very solemn and affecting passages. — We have received the Minutes of the General Association of New York for the last year. The statistical returns are sorrowfully defective, but in the eight, out of ten, minor Associations, which are reported, there appear to be 122 churches, 86 ministers, and above 8,000 members. "The Lord make his people an hundred times so many more as they be!" — Rev. Dr. Pierce's Election Sermon has made its appearance. Every one who has seen Dr. Parr's wig, if we may believe Sidney Smith, may from thence form a just opinion of the manner in which that dignitary constructed his Spital Sermon. So, on the contrary, every one who reads Dr. Pierce's Election Sermon, may form a sound judgment as to the whole aspect of the beloved and honored patriarch of Brookline. It is square-built, hearty and hale; with a benignant visage and beaming eye. Of course, no one would scrutinize a discourse pronounced on such an occasion with a view of settling that most perplexing problem, and most mysterious point in modern divinity, to wit, the real theological sentiments of the worthy Doctor.

MONTHLY RECORD.

Next Election Sermon. — Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, President of Amherst College, has received and accepted the legislative appointment to perform this service; one of the usages in which the old religious sentiment of our fathers survives to our times. He will discharge this duty in the best manner and spirit; and in such sort, that, if the fathers of our commonwealth could speak from their graves, they would say: "We now see that we did not live, and toil, and suffer in vain!" A seat in the legislature seems, with many, to be at the summit of earthly felicity; but they who are so happy as to obtain it by the suffrages of the people at the next election, will be in more enviable plight than usual, when they shall sit, whether as Pew-seyites or Pew-ritans, in the roomy slips of the venerable Old South, to hear the next "election sermon."

Digitized by Google

State Temperance Convention. — A very large and respectable Convention of the friends of Temperance, from all parts of the State, was held in Boston, on the 15th and 16th days of February. It is many years since an assemblage of the kind has been held. This one seems to have been called forth by the statements made by his Honor, the mayor of Boston, in his inaugural speech, which, in this way, has done some good; while there is good ground for the belief that the policy of the city government will not return to the odious and senseless practice of licensing iniquity. — In the Convention, the highest and fullest testimony was borne to the zeal and stedfastness of the ministers and the churches in supporting and carrying on the Temperance Reform.

Hollis Professorship of Divinity. — Rev. Dr. Gannett is making some effort in the Board of Overseers to induce the Corporation of Harvard College, to fill the vacancy in the Hollis Professorship, or in some other way to make provision for the spiritual wants of the students. We like this movement, provided it be rightly directed. Let the Hollis Professorship be honorably filled by a soundly orthodox and truly pious man. And if the Unitarians dare not trust him alone, let them provide means for sustaining another laborer of their own sort; even as in the German Universities, they have professors of every shade of theology and neology. Let them run the race of usefulness together, and see which will do the most, by the blessing of God, to elevate the mind and heart of that interesting community.

The Late David Hale, Esq. — This good man has left his tabernacle of clay, as well as his "Broadway Tabernacle," for a mansion in a city infinitely more glorious than the empire city of New York. Mr. Thompson's sermon on occasion of his death, is admirably adapted to do good among "business men." Only we could not but smile at the seeming simplicity with which the theology of Dr. Griffin, who was Mr. Hale's spiritual father, is called "Hyper-Calvinism!". Even the Princeton men, who professedly abjure that *ism*, did not regard Dr. Griffin as sufficiently Calvinistic for them.

ORDINATIONS.

Jan. 18. Mr. Javan K. Mason, Hampden, Me.
Feb. 7. Mr. Artemas Dean, Jr., Johnson, Vt.

INSTALLATIONS.

Jan. 4. Rev. E. P. Dyer, Hingham, Mass.
" 23. Rev. Henry Kendall, East Bloomfield, N. Y.
" 25. Rev. A. L. Stone, Park Street Church, Boston.
" 31. Rev. James L. Merrick, South Church, Amherst.
Feb. 15. Rev. G. W. Bourne, Mariners' Church, Boston.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. H. SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
L. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill*, *Boston*.

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] APRIL, 1849. [3

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATOR

A

Religious and Literary Magazine

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Holy Bible,	145
Freedom of Inquiry, and Romanism,	154
A Sacramental Meditation,	163
Novel Reading,	167
Reviews:	
Turnbull's Theophany,	175
Nourse's Remarks on the Past and its Legacies,	181
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Prayer-Meetings,	186
Margaret Smith's Journal,	187
Dr. De Wette,	187
The Histories of Tacitus,	189
Embarkation of Messrs. Judson and Newell, A. D. 1812,	190
Roger Williams,	190
Monthly Record,	192

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office nine dollars, shall receive six copies of the Christian Observatory for one year.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863 Sept. 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. APRIL, 1849. No. 4.

THE HOLY BIBLE.

THIS is the acknowledged title of the book of books. Nor do we know that the propriety of it, as designating the most peculiar feature of that wonderful work, has ever been directly brought in question. Yet we constantly hear objections to the Bible, which betray a most unfounded and injurious doubt on that point; for each of them, if rightly interpreted, would be substantially this: "I am holier than the Bible!"

It is certain that no claim can be higher than that made by this book, upon the reverence, confidence, and submission of all men. It challenges all human and angelic inspection, when it declares, that "every word of God is pure." We do not, indeed, claim for it an accommodation to all the conventional notions of the successive ages and stages of society through which it is to pass; nor a prudish conformity to the morbid delicacy and refinement which may be found in any coterie of "mutual admirationists;" nor a symbolizing with all the pseudo-philanthropy which, from age to age, is seen rivalling its pretensions. Nor shall we here undertake a vindication of the claims of the Scriptures to be the true and only standard by which all moral sentiment and principle, all manners, customs, maxims, and notions, are to be tried; and by which the public taste is to be formed. We intend merely to relieve candid minds from difficulties which, even if unnoticed by themselves, greatly hinder that cordial, simple, confiding employment of the Scriptures, by which they become "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

Digitized by Google

for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

We have known an entire and immense sect make what they call the indelicacy of the Scriptures one of many reasons for refusing the use of them to children and the unlearned. Of the sincerity of the Council of Trent, and its adherents, we may not be competent judges. But we are compelled to demand, whether the world has gained by exchanging the word of God for the inquiries of the confessional, irresponsible, guarded from exposure to the public eye, poured for centuries into the ears of women and children by such men as Rome has permitted to exercise this ghostly function? Has the world gained in purity and happiness, by substituting this for the popular use of the Bible; for the perusal, by every human being, of that which his Creator has judged it safe and necessary for him to hear? We repel the impious charge, that the Bible is not a safe book, a proper book for any human being, and all human beings. Even if it were true, that it contained passages whose direct tendency, unless guarded against, would, in the present state of human nature be hurtful, it would be no more than is true of many things in what we call "nature," whose authorship must certainly be traced to a holy Creator; who designed not injury, but benefit by all his works; and yet, who so constructed the world that men might be injured, nay, would be injured by many things in it, if not carefully guarded against. Hurtful animals and poisonous substances have their place and work in this beneficent structure; and man will be injured by them, if he is merely careless; much more, if predisposed to self-destruction. We admit, however, the existence of no such hurtful tendency in any part of the Scriptures, except by wilful perversion. We have the most conclusive evidence that it was "all given by inspiration of God;" written by "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and is "all profitable." We may not be able to shew all the design of each passage, but we have seen so much importance in many passages, that this fastidiousness would have excluded, as to justify our resting with entire confidence in the conviction, that if we knew more, we should see the same importance in all. We admit that the Bible contains many passages which, all agree, should not be read in promiscuous assemblies, as society now is.

Digitized by Google

If any person, then, is disquieted by these features of the sacred writings; or, if he is shaken by all that is said about the vindictiveness of Moses and David; or, the record of crimes committed by the very authors of some of the books, let him begin anew his examination of the subject, by inquiring what the scope of the work is. We do not believe that any man ever doubted whether the whole intention of the authors of that book was, to produce perfect moral purity in man. We can conceive of one saying: "If I should take the spirit of the Jews for a model, I would hate my enemies, and glory in exterminating them; or, if I should adopt the language and sentiment of many of the Psalms, I should be vindictive." But we will not now stop to defend Moses or David in these matters. The question we here propose is not, Whether the Jews were commissioned to destroy the Canaanites? or whether there is not a profound and vital principle involved in the question of the imprecatory Psalms, which our philanthropic skeptics appear never to have contemplated? But we inquire, Whether any man believes that the aim and intention of the writers of that volume is, to make men revengeful and warlike? and whether Jesus Christ, in sanctioning and commending the Old Testament, as he did, aimed to make warriors and vindictive men? We might rest this point on that appeal. But we ask again, Whether any man ever rejected the divine authority of the Bible on account of its injurious influence on his character? or whether he earnestly desired to become holy, and found that book a hindrance to him? or whether the long battle which that book has fought, has been against the holiness of mankind, and against the holiest of men?

We believe that no such case as we have just described, unless accompanied by insanity, is on human record. The work contains two grand divisions; the law-system, and the gospel-system. The precepts of the Bible are the embodiment of all moral purity. The man who should perfectly obey them, would be like a spotless angel, moving among a race of sinful men. The penalties and threatenings all move in the same line. They exhibit the whole character, government, and providence of Jehovah, as set for the defence of moral purity, and the extermination of all moral evil. The rewards set before men in this book, are all holy in themselves, and encouragements to holiness. Into the heaven which is set forth, "nothing that defileth," can enter.

Digitized by Google

In a word, the sum of its requirements is a supreme and perfect complacency in him who is infinite in holiness. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

Some, however, have imagined, while they could not deny what we have maintained as to the law, that the gospel abates this standard, and relaxes the resistance of the law to sin. But they ever misapprehend its nature, in making this objection. The entire scope of the gospel is, to release the mind from despair and discouragement, in returning to God and virtue. The Pharisees of Christ's day could not understand this feature of his ministry; and it is not surprising if those of subsequent days should have had the same embarrassment. If a soul is contented to live in a sinful state, the word of God has only warnings and exhortations for it; but the instant it would burst its fetters, and leave the pollution of a proud and ungodly heart, the Bible offers all the aid of heaven, all the sympathy of God, all the glories of eternity, to strengthen that purpose. We need say no more, than to refer to its tests of character; its "exceeding great and precious promises, by which we are made partakers of the divine nature;" its rewards; and, above all, its model, Christ.

What then in fact, and in experience, has been the influence of that book on the human heart, and the human race? Socrates and Plato labored to elevate man, by rectifying his philosophy, and by purifying his religion. But they failed of two grand elements; a remedy of sufficient efficacy; a remedy which the unlettered could apply to themselves. "This remedy did Wisdom find." "The gospel was preached to the poor." Unlettered men, savages, murderers, robbers, harlots, heard it, felt its power, and were purified by it. It wrought prodigies in the renovation of individual character. It gradually spread outward and upward in society, until it was infused into all the fountains of public sentiment and social influence; until the religion of the people, the morality of the philosophers, and the maxims and customs of society, were radically changed. The spirit of revenge was no longer incorporated in religion; pride no longer held the place belonging to humility; polygamy, unjustifiable divorce, and other fashionable crimes, even of the Jewish patriarchs, were branded with ignominy; legislation, manners, morals, maxims, social usages, and domestic life, all felt a new breath of heaven at once purifying and invigorating them. And however

Digitized by Google

much the Christian nations may fall below the purity of the Bible, their laws, their customs, and their social life, are immeasurably above those of every other people.

But we have not yet met the objections in their strength. For this purpose, we must come to the contents of the book, and let them speak for themselves. We cannot, however, but remark, how certain it is, that, the world over, the best families and the best men in any neighborhood or community, are great admirers of the Bible; that it is most read in the best regulated households; that it runs through the purest literature of every age, like gold threads in a silken tissue; and that the sublimest strains of eloquence and of song are but the echoes of its pure effusions.

Still, it is said, that there are passages and phrases in the Bible which are entirely offensive to a refined ear; and that there are other parts which degrade, rather than elevate, the soul. These objections are sometimes uttered by such persons, and with so much seriousness of manner, that we cannot pass them in silence, however erroneous they may seem to us. We admit that there are descriptions and phrases in the Bible, which one would not wish to read before a promiscuous assembly; nor in all cases, even in the family. These cases may be reduced to several classes. One is, that of words and phrases which are not repeated in the ordinary intercourse of good society. Some of these, it will be noticed, belong to the conversation of an ancient and oriental society, whose standard of refinement was very different from ours, perhaps equally pure in its spirit, though differing in form. Others belong to the ever-fluctuating usages of language. The translators were men of the highest social standing; and they employed the language of polite society in their day, so far as it truly expressed the meaning of the inspired text. Nor do we hesitate, when meeting such phrases, to substitute others, admitted by the speech of our day. But the objection strikes below phraseology, and affects the very substance of the work. There are scenes in Genesis, and Judges, and other parts, at which some stumble, who have at best, only a faint reverence for the Scriptures. And even some noted critics, and defenders of the sacred canon, venture the shafts of their wit against the Canticles, and its commentators and admirers.

Now it must be remembered that the Scriptures were written for all ages and all nations, and for very various ends; or rather,

Digitized by Google

for one great end, to be accomplished by very various means. As an eminent critic has remarked: "There is not a narration in the Old Testament, which had not once its use. Examine the story of Er and Onan, and of Judah's connexion with his daughter-in-law, Tamar; which is certainly among the narratives that at first sight, we should be inclined to spare, and even be prone to wonder how it came there. Yet in Matt. i. 3, we find the fruit of that unlawful connection, Pharez and Zara, in the genealogical register of the evangelist. It is one link in counting the genealogy of Joseph, from Abraham downwards."

In regard to many of the topics introduced into the sacred narrative, we would further remark, that the book of providence, a leaf of which we turn over every day, contains a multitude of topics, which we read for ourselves, but about which we converse with great reserve. And this is, in fact, a part of the discipline of life, cultivating refinement by regulating the kind and degree of attention we shall bestow upon such objects and events, and calling into exercise the sense of propriety in all our conversation. Indeed, if we adopted so refined a rule of exclusion as this objection involves, we should go out of this world. The Bible is also written as much for the individual, and for the secret place of his holiest retirement, as for social life and great assemblies. There, it may be very important that our heavenly Father should unveil to us, in his own holy presence, and with his own chastened description, some of the wickedness that has been, not to excite our admiration, but our disgust at sin, and our dread of its consequences; and to shew to children and adults, that his holy eye marks every transgression. If a prurient imagination is excited to evil by such descriptions, in such connexions, it is as when the sun-beam in its purity, falls on a dunghill, and the natural exhalation betrays the rank corruption. But, it is asked, Why subject the wicked heart to such an influence? That appeal arraigns the whole plan of providence. Men are tempted to sin by God's works, made for totally different purposes. "Let no man say when he is tempted: 'I am tempted of God,' for God tempteth no man."

The main strength however, of the attack upon the purity of the Scriptures, we suppose to be founded upon the wars of Moses, and those of the Judges and Kings of Israel; and especially upon the imprecatory Psalms.

Digitized by Google

Let us consider the exterminating wars of the Jews. When we enter upon a formal defence of that part of the Scriptures which records these wars, we feel as if we had set up a man of straw, to shew our skill in pulling it down again. And yet it is so real a stumbling-block to many, that it may be a serious and beneficent service to place them at our own point of observation. It must, then, be borne in mind, that the Bible is, in part, a reduction to writing of the great plan of providence, sometimes anticipative or prophetical; sometimes retrospective or historical. Is providence unholy? Surely not. Why then, should the record of its proceedings be so? But, it is replied, our difficulty is with God's approving of the indiscriminate destruction of men, women, and children. Certainly he approves of it so far as to threaten that he will do it; as actually to do it in every age. Either all this suffering comes to express his indignation against sin, or it has no meaning. And if God in all his providence, has ever been inflicting suffering on sinners, has exterminated nations by wars and plagues, and *that* is not unholy, how can it be unholy to record it? And why may not Moses, and the Israelites, have proceeded as the magistrate or judge proceeds now to the execution of the sentence of the law by the proper agency, without any wrong feeling? The infliction of punishment, even the administration of parental reproof, may be performed with wrong feeling. But it is not so of necessity. That Moses and the Jews punished those vile nations, and so far dried up the fountains of crime, was right; and so far the Scripture approves of it. If they indulged wrong feelings, it was their fault; and they unquestionably, as we often see in their history, met the same retributive justice for their wickedness. But is it not hurtful to us to read these records? That depends upon yourself. It may hurt you to read an account of the earthquake in Lisbon; and it may do you good. You are responsible for the effects. The history is not responsible; and especially if the event is described as a part of the providential action of Him who contendeth with man in righteousness.

But, it is said, the Psalms breathe out threatening, slaughter, and vengeance. To approximate to the objector as much as possible, we will concede that when we read the ninth verse of Psalm CXXXVII. we tremble. But the source of this emotion is by no means the same as that of his feeling. Ours is a horror at the terrible nature of sin as exemplified in the conduct of the

Digitized by Google

Babylonians, which brought a servant of God, under the inspiration of the pure Spirit of God, to conquer his natural sympathies so far; and thus fearfully to demand that God should interfere, and destroy the very race that ever had, and it appeared, ever would carry on the trade of murder and oppression. Babylon was an instance of a nation throwing itself into this position: "We are determined to worship devils, to defy the living God, to live in wealth and debauchery, to be a nation of men-hunters; war is our trade; the deeds of our heroes are the themes of our poetry; and the groans of our vanquished foes are the chorus of our festive songs. The degradation of the daughters of Zion is our delight. Slaughter, vengeance, slavery, tribute, are the terms of fellowship we hold out to mankind. As to the worship of Jehovah, it shall never stand while Bel has a temple or a worshipper." The alternative then was, by the choice and decision of Babylon herself, extermination on one side or the other. Her children were to be trained in the same demoniacal spirit. What, then, could a pious Jew say in such circumstances? He had not created the alternative; he did not desire it. That we have not exaggerated the case, the whole history of those times will shew.

But we must not rest in particular instances. We have selected one of the strongest as a specimen, to test it by a candid examination of its meaning and spirit. On these passages as a whole, our difficulties respect the feelings displayed by their authors; and the feelings which they awaken in the readers.

A very able defence of the purity of the feeling exhibited in these passages will be found in the Bibliotheca Sacra of February, 1844. The ground of that defence is, that indignation at the commission of crime, compassion toward the injured, and a sense of injustice strengthening with time, constitute original and universal principles of human nature. These principles or sentiments are not malicious, but essential to a generous and enlightened sympathy. That this position is tenable, nay, that it cannot be shaken, we are quite confident. And if no other defence could be made, it would be sufficient for that charity which thinketh no evil, which imputes the good motive where a good motive can account for the act in question. But there is a higher ground than this, which has been already suggested. We are living in the midst of God's holy actions. The laws of nature are directly his acts; every thing in fact is his, and involves his

Digitized by Google

direct volition, except the sinful acts of his creatures. And his will mysteriously blends itself, yet uncontaminated, with the corrupt actions of men. He gave his son to death by the "wicked hands" of Judas, and Pilate, and the Roman soldiers. The question is of the first practical moment: Do we approve of God's actions? Do we cordially approve of them? Shall we exult in them in heaven and on earth? Or is there always to be a dark, sullen, suspicious remembrance of his overthrowing Sodom, destroying Canaan, and ordaining "Tophet of old;" making it "deep and large; the pile thereof being fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindling it." We are to determine whether, when Jesus, the judge, pronounces the last sentence: "Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," our human sympathy, or our loyal sympathy with the judge, is to prevail. One, or the other, must do so. We regard this question as one of deep and solemn interest, involving not merely our acceptance or rejection of the Bible; but our loyalty and happiness under the dominion of Jesus. Shall we be morose, captious, and gloomy? — "prisoners' friends," rather than friends of holiness, and of God?

It is not mere human sympathy, and moral refinement, that meets with such difficulty in these passages. It is not a mark of superior character to be offended at them. We trace it to many causes, betraying either an utter want of piety, or of a sufficiently intelligent piety. It betrays the want of a full appreciation of the circumstances of the writer; or, of the exercise of what may be called the historical imagination; a want of charity towards the authors, in supposing bad motives, where good motives are possible and probable; a want of zeal for justice and religion; a want of sympathy with providence, and thus a want of preparation for heaven. The prayer of earth and the praise of heaven are to have at least one expression in common: "Thy will be done!" It is not, then, merely passages of the Bible that offend, but it is equally passages of providence, — texts of the world's great history. This sensitiveness betrays not a want of sympathy with Moses and David merely, but also with Jesus Christ. He expressed the will of his Father in his fearful threatenings, and in that will he fully acquiesced. Are we then holier, more humane, than he that came to die for us! May the atheistical historian record the destruction of wicked and tyrannical men with satis-

Digitized by Google

faction, and escape this censure; but must holy men of God, giving utterance to the feeling of righteous exultation in the final overthrow of the powers that resisted all good and fostered all wickedness, be considered worthy of abhorrence? Life is a deep tragedy. In the three great dramas of Macbeth, Wallenstein, and Faust, the world is satisfied with a tragical ending: nay, demands it. "Yet," says the profound Schlegel, "a tragedy of this kind is perhaps the more perfect in proportion as the destruction is represented, not as anything external, capricious, or predestinated, but as a darkness into which the hero has sunk, step by step, descending, not without free-will, and in consequence of his guilt." Indeed, if the three rules of dramatic composition laid down by this great critic were applied to the Scriptures, they would be found to abound in the highest specimens of each kind. There are exhibitions of each of the three kinds of "dramatic conclusion and representation, — those of destruction, of reconciliation, and of glorification." Such is life, such is the Bible. And in this world and the next, we must cordially approve of the severer, as well as the milder, attributes of Jehovah and his government. These passages should cause us to tremble at the exhibition they make of the nature and consequences of sin; to revere the awful justice there manifested; and to fly to that mercy, which waits to deliver us from deserved judgments. "Thy Word is very pure; therefore thy servant loveth it."

FREEDOM OF INQUIRY, AND ROMANISM.

THE chief constitutional elements of the Romish hierarchy are, the infallibility of the pope, the union of Church and State, and the pope's supremacy in both. The pope being the Vicar of God on earth, and charged with political, as well as religious interests, the civil and ecclesiastical functionaries, directly or indirectly, receive their jurisdiction from him. The king is therefore considered as regularly and securely seated on his throne, only when he has received the confirmatory unction of the sovereign pontiff. Then the temporal prince becomes the pledged friend and ally of the spiritual, and the civil power is made subservient to the

Digitized by Google

ecclesiastical. Thus the papal throne towers above all earthly "principalities and powers," and a most humiliating submission to the decisions of the reputed Infallible, is exacted of both potentates and people.

What, now, has been the bearing of this principle of ecclesiastical constitution, upon freedom of inquiry? It is evident, that in a single brief article, little can be done in answer to such a question, except to delineate some general and well-known historical facts.

As the Romish hierarchy became consolidated, the Bible was gradually withdrawn from the people, and hidden in old cathedrals and the dusty corners of convent libraries. The temple of knowledge was locked against all eager inquirers, and the key hung up in the Vatican at Rome. Nearly simultaneous with this, the right of private judgment was taken away. The church, or rather, the hierarchy, is made the only authorized mediator between the Father of mercies, and his ignorant, erring children. What she teaches, they must receive; and from all that she forbids, they must scrupulously abstain.

Now what *results* followed this withdrawment of the Bible, and this denial of the right of private judgment?

> "Ah, when the searching eye of heaven is hid,
> Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen."

The Saviour of the world is displaced from his mediatorial throne, by the elevation of his virgin mother. The holiness of poor canonized saints, is made transferable for the benefit of rich, confessing, although unrepenting, sinners. In the fiscal arrangements of the church, births and burials, prayers and pardons, the suspension of the divine law and its satisfaction, — all things, except the liberty to believe and teach the pure gospel, are paid for in gold; the living are laid under tribute for the alleged benefit of the dead; not content with assessing men while in the flesh, she consigns them to purgatorial torments of her own invention; releasement from which even the holiest can obtain, only by masses at so much apiece, with a discount for a large quantity. In exchange for the withdrawn Word of God, and the suppressed right of private judgment and free inquiry, she gives to her deluded children the benefits of her most wonderful arts, not set down in chemical nomenclatures, of transmuting bread and wine

Digitized by Google

into the veritable divinity, flesh and blood of the Redeemer; and this without changing their qualities. She teaches them to discover, and preserve, and multiply indefinitely, the bones of canonized saints, the wood of the sacred cross, fragments of the ark, thorns from the mock crown of the Saviour, and shreds of his holy garment, and girdles and slippers of Mary, his mother. She grants unlimited license in the ancient art of shrine-making; and her traffic is in crucifixes, rosaries, breviaries, images, copes, and cowls. She claims to impart to her priesthood the power of miracles, and of preaching with such efficacy as to cause horses to kneel in adoration before the host, swallows to acknowledge the Catholic faith, and devout fishes to assemble as attentive auditors.

The genius of the Romish system is complete hostility to free thought. No other enemy is so feared by the mother of abominations. Her priesthood is hence bound to an unquestioning obedience to her imperious will. And that they may have no hindering entanglements from social ties, the vow of perpetual celibacy is upon them; although many of them, says Macaulay, are "just as licentious as a fine sense of the graceful will permit." Her discipline is a regime of privilege and power, of sanctity and sacrilege, most sagaciously contrived to keep from the human mind all elements of noble achievement, and render it like an exhausted receiver, within which no glowing sentiment, or breathing thought can live. Her order is the enforced regularity of absolutism. Her peace is the tranquillity of ignorance and of stupidity. Her unity is the harmony of chaos, — the gregariousness of all manner of clean and unclean beasts, driven together by the hounds and horns of her inquisitorial huntsmen. Her wars have been against "the pestilent liberty of speech and the press." Her vestments are dripping with the blood of the martyrs.

There is an almost resistless artistic beauty and power of appeal to the imagination, in the "dim religious light," and the magic lanthorn which are essential to a successful exhibition. In the light fore-ground, the arts of music, poetry, painting, and statuary, appear to the entranced beholder, like truth, nature, and freedom. But beyond, in the shaded vista, all is cold, and cramped, and remorseless as death; when men

> "Talk of graves, and worms, and epitaphs,
> Make dust their papers, and with rainy eye
> Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth."

Digitized by Google

One of the chief means on which the church of Rome has relied for suppressing free thought and speech, is the Inquisition. Within the enclosures of this "court of death," are found her iron shears, with which the faith of men was wont to be pared, and shapen into agreement with her canons and her catechisms. There is the statue of the blessed virgin, with her spiked brazen bosom, and her iron arms, with which this tender mother receives her wayward children to her fond embrace. And there, too, are the huge "keys" of St. Peter, and the deep dungeons and guarded cells, and massive doors, within which she locks up poor tempted pilgrims, to keep them unspotted from the world, and uninfected by the contagion of free inquiry. Behind all, upon his bloody throne, sits the dark-visaged inquisitor. His "bones are marrowless," and his "blood is cold," and he has a "lean and hungry look," and is filled "top-full of direst cruelty." For this inhuman work, a laic must not be taken, for he has some social bands, or some "dregs of conscience," which may make him a coward. A *monk*, an isolated, dehumanized monk, is the only person perfectly qualified for the office. Suspicion drags before him the high and the low; and on suspicion he consigns the body to the flames of the stake, and the soul to the torments of hell.

The most concealed germ of freedom of inquiry has been hunted out of the secret depths of the soul, by the disguised or open emissaries of the Inquisition. It was the proclaimed object and intent of this spiritual court, to prevent free thought and speech. Every trace of them, in domestic or civil life, it sought to exterminate. "Dishonor of the reason," says Schiller, "and the murder of the soul, constitute its vows. Its instruments are terror and disgrace. Every passion is in its pay, and its snares lie in every joy of life. Even solitude is not secure from its espionage; and the fear of its omnipresence, holds freedom fettered, even in the depths of the soul. All the instincts of humanity has it trodden down under the feet of credulity, and to it have been made to yield all those bands which men esteem holiest. All claims upon his race are, for the heretic, disallowed. For, by the least infraction of the law of mother church, he has destroyed his humanity. A modest doubt as to the infallibility of the pope, is esteemed parricide. Even the lifeless body belonging to the heretic is cursed. No destiny can rescue its victims, and the grave itself is no refuge from its terrible arms."

Digitized by Google

Another auxiliary of the Romish church, in her wars against freedom of inquiry, is the Order of Jesuits. In this order was "concentrated the quintessence of the Catholic spirit." To the three vows of poverty, chastity, and monastic obedience, common to other orders, Loyola added a *fourth*, peculiar to the members of his society. It was the vow of obedience to the pope in the service of the church, free from all charge for their support. This procured them their institution from Paul III., in 1540. In nine years they gained a superiority to all human authority and control, except that of the pope. The constitution of the society is essentially military, and most rigidly despotic, all power being lodged with the general. In his hands, all are to be as "a staff," or "as a dead body." And yet, it was the boast of Ignatius, that he wished for only one month to secure the conquest of the spirit, and initiate one into the order. This achievement over the will and conscience is made by means of the "spiritual exercises." "These," says Father de Ravignan, "have created the society. They maintain it, preserve it; and give it life." Hence this book is placed at the threshold of the order. In thirty days, it regenerates. During this period, the novice is secluded from the world. He contemplates the life of Christ in a *military* parable. Two companies, two standards, two chiefs, two armies, two spirits, are drawn out before his excited imagination. Satan appears in Babylon. On his banners are engraven, in flaming characters, "Riches, Honor, Pride." Jesus is seated on a low plain in Jerusalem, surrounded by images of sweetness, and peace, and gentleness. "Poverty, Reproach, Humility," are inscribed on his banner. This is called the meditation of the two standards, in view of which the trembling pupil is called to choose; yet, into which so much has been thrown that is imposing and dazzling, of the glory of monastic life, as to leave him almost without the power of free choice. He is taken in contemplation, to the infernal regions. He is shewn the writhing and burning souls of the lost, the heated furnaces, and the huge broiling monsters. He sees the smoke of their torment, and snuffs the sulphuric and putrid odor, and even tastes the wormwood and the gall. He sees his own sins traced upon paper, in their different enormity, by lines of different sizes. Now he prostrates himself with his face to the ground, and now lies upon his back, as the book directs. He sits, and stands, and sighs, and groans, and weeps, and

Digitized by Google

reflects, and prays, all by a prescribed rule. In this way, the victim is brought to the will of the ghostly fathers. By this means, the spirit is fitted to the mould. The man is lost in the order. His last act of freedom is his choice of perpetual slavery. His consecration is not to Jesus, but to the pretended "Company of Jesus." "If the authority declares, that that which seems to you white, is black, affirm that it is black." * Thus, by a mysterious and resistless process, by voluntary acts, and involuntary admissions, men are borne from the path of humanity, into the enclosures of a society hostile to humanity. From the life of free thoughts and free words, they are taken into the close atmosphere of the tombs, to lie as corpses in the caverns of the dead. The order is a complete monarchy over the mind, conscience, will, and estates of its members. Espionage and inquisitions reign in all grades and institutions of the company. All are watched by all; and all give account to the general of the order, who gives account to no one.

The agency of the Jesuits in causing the great reaction in favor of Romanism, after the Reformation, is written by every modern historian of the Church. But so arrogant, ambitious, and despotic did they every where shew themselves, so intolerant of an equal in their missionary fields, so eager to monopolize the richest commerce, and to engross the richest benefices, and to occupy all the high places of power, that they have been banished by nearly every civilized nation on the globe. What the Inquisition sought to effect against free inquiry by fire, the Jesuits aim to accomplish by stratagem and fraud. They adopt a morality which makes the expiation of crime as easy as its commission, not requiring men to forsake it, but only to confess it; thus leaving the fancied pleasure of sin, without its guilt.

But has there not been a change? Has not Rome learned wisdom from the past, and reformed? That her power is weakened, even in her strong holds, — that her throne is trembling, if not already overturned, even in the metropolis of her dark empire, is manifest as the sun at noon. See her fugitive head, cut clean from her shoulders, escaping from the just indignation of a long oppressed people. See a provisional government of their own institution, administering the affairs of the pontifical states, aided

* Spiritual Exercises, P. 291.

Digitized by Google

by a Chamber of Deputies, a National Guard, and free journals. True, the Inquisition has been abolished in form, but its spirit survives. The Order of Jesuits was annulled by Clement XIV.; but it was restored again in 1814, and has since been weaving dark webs of intrigue and treason, and establishing all over the world, its pestilent dispensaries from which to drug the human mind into ignorance and stupidity, and throw it back into the regions of bigotry and intolerance, from which it has been escaping. The extension of commerce and of international communication, the progress of science, the diffusion of intelligence, and the circulation of the Scriptures, have compelled a modified application of her principles. That there has been no essential change, however, is evident from the present position of Pius IX. Though a fugitive, he dictates, as conditions of his return to the Quirinal, the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, the disbanding of the National Guards, and the restoration of the censorship of the press. He holds to the great principles of the hierarchy, the political and ecclesiastical supremacy of the pope, the infallibility of the church, the denial of the right of private judgment, and the abduction of the Bible from the homes and the hearts of the people. The operation of these is, to check inquiry, to repress all free aspirations, and to degrade man in the whole sphere of his humanity. It sets at plain defiance the divine injunction to "search the Scriptures," and shuts men up, for their religion, to the priest, the service-book, and the catechism.

As a spiritual despotism, the Romish hierarchy must stand, constitutionally as it is, or fall by its own weight. So Romanists themselves decided, in the contest with the reformers. Erasmus sought reform, though timidly. Luther and Melanchthon, and their associates sought it more earnestly and boldly. Nor did they break from the church, until their efforts caused her such vexation, that she cast them out as guilty of damnable heresy. Then the crisis had come. The die was cast. They must protest, or do nothing. They did protest against all her idolatry and intolerance. The papal anathema roused the Saxon monk to a pitch of moral heroism, which excited the admiration of one party, and the dread of the other. "You will burn me, for answer to the God's message, which I strive to bring you. I take your bull as a parchment lie, and burn *that*. This is what I do!" And proceeding with it to the east gate of Wittemburg, amidst the

Digitized by Google

plaudits of congregated beholders, he kindled a fire, whose flames illuminated the whole of the north of Europe, and whose light will shine on to the end of time. It was here that Luther, trusting in the omnipotence of truth, flung defiance at the polished pagan pope, and then gave himself up to God, and to his own destiny. "This thing of yours, which you call a pardon of sin, is a bit of rag-paper with ink. It is nothing else. God alone can pardon sin. I stand here on this, since you drive me to it. And, standing on this, I, a poor German monk, am stronger than you all. I stand solitary and friendless, one man on God's truth. You, with your tiaras, and triple hats, with your treasuries and armories, and thunders spiritual, stand on the devil's lie, and are not so strong."

He is cited to appear at Worms, to say if he will recant. Despite of the earnest remonstrances of his friends, who remind him of the fate of John Huss and Jerome, in whom the truth was smothered and burnt, a century before, the poor miner's son obeys the summons, and Hans Luther stands undismayed at the tribunal of his powerful foes. Behold the world's champion for free thought! The word of God in one hand, and his life in the other, he comes to the conflict. "Confute me by proofs of Scripture, or else by plain, just argument. I cannot recant otherwise. Here I stand. I can do nothing else. God help me!" And God did assist him. His words electrified the nations. The doctors could not answer him, and so they thought to burn him.

Thus it was demonstrated, that free thought and inquiry could not be tolerated in the church of Rome. These tend to reform, by discovering the necessity for it; and reform tends to ruin. The demonstration on a smaller scale, has since been a thousand times repeated. She can dissemble, but not repent. She is becoming decrepid, and the "grasshopper is a burden," and the "keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves," and "all the daughters of music are brought low," but she cannot reform. To alter is to destroy. Her pretended supremacy and infallibility are her nature. Hence, her reformers must ever be her assailants, and the projectors of her ruin. Progress, free inquiry within her pale, must move in the road to demolition. Inquiry can only discover her weakness and her wickedness; and yet men will inquire. "This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly; that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie

Digitized by Google

down in! Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his head." She has come down through the waste of dark centuries, her "feet slipping in the gore of her innumerable slain, the crosier, the scourge, the brand, and her rusty keys, still clutched in her trembling hands. What she has been, she must be or die, or rather, must be, *and* die."

Meanwhile, the genius of Liberty, with the lamp of truth in her hand, is approaching her dark domain. The mother of abominations entreats her visiter not to come too near, as the bright light of the lamp is painful to her eyes, and as the region is known to be pervaded with inflammable gases. But Liberty continues to move on; and her lamp shines with increasing brightness, revealing the hidden iniquity of ages.

The scene will soon be changed, and the stage cleared for action. The papacy will soon disrobe herself of her feminine aspect and blandishments; and the brawny "man of sin" will be revealed. He will lay off the tiara, and put on the helmet; let fall the crosier, and grasp the pike; close the service-book, and "ope the purple testament of bleeding war." The great battle of Armageddon is to be fought, truth against error, light against darkness, freedom of inquiry against ignorance, intolerance, bigotry, and persecution. Christ comes into open field against the beast. The beast shall strike at him, but shall beat the air, and fall by the force of his own misdirected blows. He will thrust at free inquiry, but it will be like stabbing the sun.

To the side of truth and freedom will be gathered the faithful and the free from every clime. Even now, the battle rages on the banks of the Danube and the Tiber, in France and the islands of the sea. Tribes, and kindreds, and tongues come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. They are borne on by the "swelling tide of accusations," flowing down from past ages, against the foe. They are cheered on by the voices of the slain witnesses under the altar, saying: "How long, Lord God Almighty, shall we not be avenged?" And their final pean shall be, as in the visions of the seer of Patmos: "Babylon, the great, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day,—death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

Digitized by Google

A SACRAMENTAL MEDITATION.

I AM a member of the church, surrounded by my fellow Christians, Christ's table spread before me, himself to preside.

And what is the church? As it appears visibly, it consists of those who profess the true religion, maintain its ordinances, and have entered into covenant with God, and with one another. But are there not tares among the wheat, foolish virgins among the wise? "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." The real church then contains only those who have the spirit of Christ. A day of separation is coming. "The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all that offend and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." O awful day! In what condition shall I be found? A true disciple who can stand the trial of fire; or a false professor who will be consumed by the breath of his coming? If I am a true disciple, then I love my Saviour supremely, and strive to obey him? I love God's people, because they are godly? I love holiness, and desire to obtain it? If I am a true disciple, I hate iniquity and all the works of the devil; and having been a great sinner, I bear in my bosom a broken and a contrite spirit. Have I these marks of God's children? Can I overcome, when I am judged upon them? Alas, who can tell? Who can understand himself? I hope; but may I not be deceived? O dreadful state, — to think myself well, when I am mortally sick; to profess godliness, when I am a child of the devil; outwardly, and in appearance ascending to heaven, inwardly and really going down to hell. Suppose the worst. Be it that to this hour, I am an impenitent sinner! Is there not mercy enough in Christ even for me? Cannot his blood cleanse from *all* sin? I will cast myself at his blessed feet. "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!" I clasp thy cross. I give myself to thee. I renounce sin. Jesus, I trust in thee. I will perish nowhere, but in suppliant attitude, before thee. No! I will not doubt. I love the Lord. I love his people. I love his ordinances. I love his word. He is my supreme delight. Would I not lie down on a martyr's bed

Digitized by Google

of fire for his sake? My heart tells me I would! Yes, I love the Saviour, and he loves me! He has taken great pains to save me. He is interested in the salvation of lost sinners, and in mine, more by a thousand times, than I can be. No, I will not doubt!

> "'T is done, the great transaction 's done.
> I am my Lord's, and he is mine;
> He drew me, and I followed on,
> Charmed to confess the voice divine."

Am I then a member of the true church? And what is the church? It is the multitude of saints whose robes have been washed in the Lamb's blood. See how all the boundless plains of heaven are filled with the purest, and mightiest, and most lovely, and most loving spirits, — all happy, all sinless, all bowing in one vast congregation before Christ. These are my brethren, of every generation and clime, who have been redeemed from the earth, and now belong to that great section of the church called "triumphant." The other portion is still below. They have all been drawn from the horrible pit and the miry clay. They have all been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear son. They are in different countries, of diverse ages, and various circumstances; — some strong, and some sickly, some in prosperity, and some in sorrow, but they all love and worship Christ. They are his countless flock, and he the great shepherd of the sheep. Opposed by the world, opposed by their sinful natures, mourning over their deficiencies, yet adoring the Son of God, and rejoicing in him, they are all going heavenward. And I am among the number. Dangers surround me, but I shall be preserved; — battling it with temptations, even though wounded, I shall overcome. In dying, my Saviour will be near. I shall pass through the melancholy flood in his company without terror. With him, I shall enter the city of gold; and by him be introduced to the Eternal, and worship, with awful delight, that wonderful ONE. I shall become acquainted with many a happy angel, and with the elect of the earth. All my fellow Christians will follow in their turn, and we shall congregate in countless multitudes for his praises, in heaven. This is the church. It comprises the children of God, in contrast with those of the devil. It is the beautiful bride of Christ, his joy, and his crown.

Digitized by Google

Whence came the church? Its multitudinous members have all been sinful beings. Not one among them, except their glorious Head, was originally holy.

> "Like sheep we went astray,
> And broke the fold of God;
> Each wandering in a different way,
> But all the downward road."

A poor, senseless prodigal, I forsook my father's house. I was thoughtless, selfish, corrupt. This was my character, and the character of my race. The justice of a holy God frowned upon me, and the righteousness of his being made my punishment necessary. My sentence was passed. I stood under condemnation. My wretched race was condemned. All the world was guilty before God. Every one carried the elements of a burning hell in his bosom. Think, O my soul, of being an outcast forever; of living in corruption and despair, forever! Once made in the image of God, but then doomed to associate with devils! Oh, what misery! The worm that never dies, the blackness of darkness, a furnace of fire, these are but faint images of the remorse, despair, and agony, which must torment a damned soul. *Whence* came the church? From these loathsome, wretched sinners, transformed, blood-washed, redeemed. Redeemed? Redemption implies purchase. Who bought the church? Jesus Christ. So says the apostle: "Ye are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ." And who is Christ? He is the Son of God. And who is this Son of God? The brightness of the Father's glory, the partaker of his deity and of his throne, — the wonderful GOD-MAN, from everlasting, yet born in time; Creator, yet created; omnipotent, yet a feeble infant; knowing all things, yet increasing in wisdom like his human brethren; king of the universe, and yet a servant; himself *the life*, yet dying on the cross. Now as God he is saying: I and my Father are one; and he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. And now as man, he is a distressed captive, in the pains of an awful death crying out: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! Mysterious being! — God-man; in two distinct natures, and one person forever. This is God's Son. His infinite heart is full of tenderness. He is a man of sorrows; the tears were often on his cheek. He pitied me.

Digitized by Google

He pitied my race. He determined to save us; to save us by his own pangs, by the great atonement he would make for our sins in death. See him, that divine Saviour! Those sharp sorrows, how they pierce his soul! that bitter grief and anguish, those agonizing prayers, that bloody sweat, O, from what deep compassions they come forth! I see him seized, arraigned, accused by false witnesses, unjustly condemned, "bound, beaten, spurned, spit upon, stripped, clothed in garments of scorn, blindfolded, buffeted, spit upon again, bound to a pillar, most cruelly scourged, crowned with thorns, and struck with a reed," nailed to the cross, afflicted with insults, torments and injuries. And then those unknown pangs! that conflict with the evil powers, that mysterious bruising of the soul for human sin! *Who bears* these infinite miseries? It is Christ, the God-man, — the same who afterward appeared in glory, on lonely Patmos; whose voice was then as the sound of many waters, whose countenance was as the sun shining in its strength, and at the sight of whom his beloved disciple fell at his feet as one dead. WHO hangs on that cross, hated and hooted at, by maddened sinners of a bloody race? The same who will judge the world. "Behold he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and all nations shall wail because of him." *He* suffered, this great being, this gentle one, for me. He has redeemed me. I am his friend. I belong to his church. This is his table, spread for my refreshment. He gives me his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink.

And where is Christ? this grand, this loving, this dying one? He is *here!* He never stays away from the communion. He always meets his friends. Listen! he speaks, he whispers to many. To the wanderer, he says: "Turn ye, and view this great sight! Behold me, behold me, was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?" To the inconsistent and inconstant, shewing his hands and his side, he says: "These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." To the penitential and sin-burdened, he says: "Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." To mourners: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions." To me, methinks, I hear him say: "Fear not, for I am with thee; I will be thy God. I will strengthen thee." He is *here*. The house is illumined by his presence, — my soul is gladdened by his coming.

Digitized by Google

He invites me to his table. Dear Lord, and may I come? Break, hardened heart. "I must not look on a humbled, broken Christ with an unhumbled, unbroken heart. Come, my soul, sit down by the cross, as a true mourner. Let me weep to see him weep, and bleed to see him bleed," — and love much, because forgiven much; and love much because he is altogether lovely. Begone, care! begone, world! let me talk with him whom my soul loveth. "Draw me, we will run after thee; the King hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine; the upright love thee."

I hear him say: "Eat, O friend; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O, beloved." This is his body. I must eat of it in faith, and after a spiritual manner, lest I eat to my condemnation. And this is his blood, shed for me and for many, for the remission of sin. If I drink, I must be holy, for I cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils. Jesus draws me. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." I will take this living food; and, O thou Son of God, keep me henceforth in the right ways of the Lord. Amen!

NOVEL READING.

It it estimated that novels and tales compose one sixth of all the present issues from the American press. In France, even previous to the late revolution, the same class of productions was only in the ratio of one sixteenth. Since that revolution, the ratio has sensibly diminished. But neither the Mexican war nor the California enterprise appears to have made any sensible change in the proportions on this side of the Atlantic. Between four and five thousand different novels are now offered for sale in this country. Go to the depôt or the landing, enter a railroad car or steamboat, and you may be pretty sure of meeting some itinerant vender of vice in the form of unbound trash. This colportage-system has attained such a degree of industry and impudence as to call for a loud remonstrance. In some quarters the nuisance has been already, in a measure, abated. Still the work goes on; and by this means, together with the periodical press, circulating library, and other agencies, the land is becoming flooded with novels and

Digitized by Google

tales, indigenous and imported. Let this evil continue unchecked, and we shall soon have a preponderance of Parisian morals, whose mysteries of iniquity are so widely spread out for inspection and imitation. Bitter fruits, which are only the portentous promise of a whole harvest, already begin to appear. We have, in a previous number, adverted to some of these indications, as seen in the elopement of infatuated misses, and in other forms. The friends of good order and sound morals are extensively awake. Still we do not conceive ourselves at liberty, as yet, to desist from attracting attention to the subject. The authors of these writings, — those filthy dreamers, — and their publishers and venders, deserve reiterated rebuke.

But we do not propose to confine our remarks to the viler specimens of this class of productions. We shall take into our survey a wider department of fiction. Of poetic fiction, in its epic, dramatic, or other forms, we say nothing. So far as unsafe, it is in general, less read and less dangerous than the fiction of prose. It is of romances, novels, and tales, as popularly known, that we speak. And in regard to these it is admitted, discrimination must be made. Those called religious, for instance, are comparatively harmless. As early as the eighth century, John of Damascus composed one which was extensively read. Like others of an early date, it may have been suggested by the Apocryphal books often bound with the Bible; though less valuable even than those books, some of which might also be called religious fictions. To the same class belong the many legends of saints, so extensively read by ecclesiastics of the Romish and other corrupt churches. The influence of these has been very pernicious, because they claim to be veritable histories, and thus give a ten-fold power to their extravagant and puerile contents.

In perfect contrast are some of the novels of modern times, in which the attempt has been made to exhibit the force of religious truths and principles, under the garb of fictitious characters and incidents. Still, with few exceptions, this whole class of writings serves up too many pious dainties; and more usually fosters a religious epicureanism and spiritual chivalry, rather than a vigorous and Scriptural piety.

A modified exception may also be made in favor of some historical novels. Now and then there is one which presents a vivid and tolerably just portraiture of the times in which the scene

Digitized by Google

is laid; but the feeling of uncertainty always arises, and with it the question whether the fancy-sketch, however interesting, be as valuable as the less enchanting outline of authentic narrative. It is far easier, no doubt, to draw upon the imagination instead of credible sources of fact, and the result may be proportionably more gratifying to minds that are perverted or ill-informed. Yet there are many obvious and grave considerations, in view of which the judicious must decline being thus pleasurably imposed upon.

Ridicule, it is true, has in some instances been very effectively employed by writers of tales and romances. Cervantes immortalized himself meritoriously in this way. The infatuation of those who penned and perused extravagant fictions was, in his age and the preceding, at its height. This he exposed and arrested; and thus laid particularly his own country under great obligation. It is not to be denied also, that sometimes from the reading of such works an incidental advantage is derived on the score of taste. In a majority of cases, however, we suppose this to be realized at too great a sacrifice.

Having made these exceptions, we may speak freely of the class of writings now under review; and we say without qualification, that they tend to fill the mind with false and pernicious notions. Writers of fiction write mainly for amusement. They feel little responsibility for the views and impressions they impart. It would be unreasonable to expect anything else of those whose profession it is to manufacture untruths. Romances and novels uniformly abound in the marvellous and the improbable. The plot is often absurd, and the incidents such as furnish no instruction relative to ordinary life. Those addicted to this species of reading, naturally acquire an inveterate habit of reading only for entertainment. Of course, they will read with little discrimination. They come inevitably to undervalue truth and established principles. They cannot avoid becoming more or less visionary, and moving mentally in an unreal world.

This implies a gross perversion of the judgment. The man of sound judgment forms a due estimate, within his sphere, of the relation of causes to their effects; and particularly in the affairs of common life, he sees the necessity, and acts upon it, of effort corresponding with the results anticipated. Now this is uniformly the point where fiction is most eminently fiction. The novelist is

Digitized by Google

unshackled by the necessities of actual history. He can multiply fortunate coincidences to his heart's content. A robber or a pirate, a rich uncle or a mysterious stranger, is always at hand when wanted. In the acquisition of property, accomplishments, esteem, or anything valuable, the common relation of means to their ends are usually, and most unscrupulously, set at defiance. The exceptions in human life are made its laws. Consequently, the reader's inclination to castle-building, which is likely to be strong enough without stimulus, becomes indomitable. Seldom do we find a novel-reader who does not live in an unreasonable expectation of some happy casualty, some fortunate juncture which shall suddenly raise him to ease, wealth, reputation, or whatever may be the special desire of his heart. Such a person will, of course, neglect the appropriate means for securing the wished-for object. He looks for riches without toil. He dreams of affection, which he is incapable of reciprocating. He expects to be admired and loved without the qualities that merit regard, and he is sure to be vexed with the world for not fulfilling his expectations. God has declared: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread;" but romance is an atheistic denial of the justice, and the very fact, of that curse.

One attendant upon this defect of judgment is an ill-regulated and over-active imagination. True, imagination is as much a gift of God as reason. True, it needs to be cultivated. True, also, it may be in some cases, desirably stimulated and guided by works of fiction. "I will tell you," said Milton, "whither my young feet wandered; I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos, the deeds of knighthood." Still it is true, that of all the intellectual powers, this ordinarily needs the least of stimulus, and the most of discipline. It is the meteor faculty, quite unreliable in this "night of time." Its uncontrolled play is the fever of the mind. Now it is such a riot of the fancy, which the greater part of fictions tend directly to stir up. A just view of the vulgar prose of our daily existence they do not present, but are perpetually beguiling with the phantasms of an unreal world. From the indispensable matter-of-fact plodding here on the earth, they carry their readers upward in perilous and profitless balloon excursions. The perusal of such works is an intellectual dram-drinking. The unhappy victims of this mental vice do not live; they dream. Often do they

Digitized by Google

experience all the *horrors* of a *delirium tremens;* and for these literary, as for other inebriates, there is no hope but in total abstinence.

The affections will also, of course, suffer harm. The majority of fictitious writings foster sentimentalism; and if there be any valueless member of the family or of society, it is the mere sentimentalist, — the person of fine feelings, — exquisitely fine feelings, — who has a profusion of tears, but no heart. Such was Laurence Sterne, who could weep over an expiring ass, yet neglect his dying mother. His counterpart may be often found, and not alone in that sex to which he belonged. Many a delicate, self-torturing, vaporish, female may be met with, abounding, not in alms-deeds, but pathetic sentences.

> "Yes, we have known a high-flown mental thing,
> As fine, as fragile as *libella's* wing,
> And soul and intellect, the ethereal mind
> Scarcely within its earthly house confined,
> On heaven oft casting an enraptured eye,
> And paying compliments to the Most High."

But in that self-same person, — no unusual one, — we have found a soul as void of genuine piety as the nether mill-stone. But to excite and strengthen this puling propensity, there is no means so effectual as novel-reading. In these works of fiction, we find substantially the same endless recurrence of at least two well known characters, who go through a variety of struggles and hardships, and a variety of vain complaints and whimperings. The woful tale calls forth a mighty tide of sympathy; — but what then? Is it a sympathy which leads to effort? Does it inspire the mind with any wise or noble purposes of doing good? No; it begets a dreamy, splenetic habit. The tendency is to debauch and harden. Scarcely any thing can be more disastrous than such an unhealthy stimulus to sympathy, which finds no appropriate expression in active benevolence. It is a vulture at the heart. Let Rousseau illustrate our meaning. Both his character and writings are in point. While yet a youth, it was his frequent practice to spend the entire night in reading romances with his father. Thus was nurtured that sensibility and heartlessness, in which he has few equals. Readily enough could he weep;

Digitized by Google

"But his were not the tears of feeling fine,
Of grief, or love; at fancy's flash they flowed,
Like burning drops from some proud, lonely pine
By lightning fired; his heart with passion glowed
'Till it consumed his life, and yet he shewed
A chilling coldness both to friend and foe;
As Etna, with its centre an abode
Of wasting fire, chills with the icy snow
Of all its desert brow the living world below."

This sentimentalism may coëxist with the most deadly passions; and lead to acts the most atrocious, as well as fantastic. Madame de Staël relates that in 1811, Monsieur de K. and Madame de V., residents in Berlin, went to an inn at Potsdam, where, after taking some refreshments, and singing hymns, the gentleman, as agreed upon by both parties, shot the lady, and then himself. Madame de V. sent her daughter to the play, the day preceding the suicide. She dressed herself in her most splendid apparel for the occasion. She had written a letter, in which she said, that from the height of heaven, she would continue to watch over her daughter's welfare! The preparations for the dreadful act were completed by religious ceremonies. Persons whose minds had not been fearfully perverted by the extravagances of fiction, could never have got up such a diabolical romance in real life, or rather in death. No people on earth are so much given to novel-reading as the Germans; and nowhere have the effects, in the form of a monstrous sentimentalism become so apparent. A young man of distinction had been crossed in his amours with a person of inferior birth, and their misfortunes made them celebrated. At length his parents, worn out by entreaties, consented to their union. The lovers, however, reflecting that their celebrity would cease with their misfortunes, agreed to meet in a romantic spot, near one of the great roads, and on the banks of one of the principal rivers in Germany; and there, after collecting flowers to deck their tombs, and erecting a little monument to their own memories, the lover shot his mistress and himself.* The case of Margaret Gottfried, a German woman executed in 1830, is also revoltingly pertinent. She had successively poisoned more than thirty persons; yet to her last day she liked sentimental emotions, and would at times cry at the recital of poems.†

* Chenevix's Essay on National Character, Vol. I. P. 170.
† Lieber's Political Ethics, Vol. II. P. 165.

Digitized by Google

But if not in this way, still by some other morbid operation, will the reading we speak of tend to enervate the whole character. It is a finical, a falsely fastidious, an unmanly type of character, which these writings contribute to form.

The effeminate and voluptuous Orientals have always discovered great fondness for the extravagant tales with which their literature, secular and sacred, abounds. In the more flourishing periods of Grecian literature, and the better days of Grecian character, romance was unknown. The same was true at Rome. There were manliness and vigor there, during the first six centuries of her history. But a change took place; and at length, when Crassus was defeated by the Parthians, the victors found copies of the Milesian and Sybarite tales in the tents of the Roman soldiers. Hence the Parthian general could not restrain his contempt for the effeminacy and licentiousness of the vanquished legions, who, even in their distant campaigns, carried these enervating compositions. Of the kings of England, no one perhaps, betrayed more moral weakness, or a greater want of good judgment and general firmness, than Henry III. One clue, at least, to his deficiencies we may find in a revenue-roll, where there is an entry of "Silver clasps and studs for his majesty's great book of romances."

It is well known that Napoleon, in his German campaigns, carried in his camp-library a copy of the Sorrows of Werter, as an index to the debilitated character of that generation of Germans. And there is no doubt but what the novel referred to, with others, contributed effectively to unnerve the minds of more than one nation with whom he contended. In narrower spheres, and in multiplied individual cases, does the same result appear. What other effect than imbecility can be expected upon a mind familiar only with scenes of dalliance and frivolity? Single books have changed the character of nations; but what romance now read bids fair to rouse noble minds, to set on foot important discoveries, or desirable revolutions?

But independently of intellectual detriment accruing from these works, we protest against them on the ground of their directly immoral and irreligious tendency. It is notorious that a considerable part of the novels now most popular, and of those which were in former years most popular, are grossly deficient in point of morals; and that very few can be named which do not, on the whole, weaken virtuous and religious princi-

Digitized by Google

ples. The favorite novelists, with here and there an exception, have pandered most adroitly, and often without a blush, to the very worst of passions. A moral man for a hero, would ruin the tale. Too often is he a wretch deserving a place in the penitentiary or on the gallows; yet so invested with shining qualities, that he captivates the fancy, and before the reader is aware, has made him by sympathy, a participant in his villanies. How are the finer and better feelings rudely sported with! How are the darker passions tempted to their ravenous work! Particularly in regard to the most important of all earthly relations do they mislead and corrupt. Conjugal fidelity, if not directly sneered at, has few charms in the picture of the popular novelist. So in the romances of the chivalrous ages, illegitimacy was an invariable charm. Tragedies in actual life, occasioned by this kind of reading, have already been enacted in our country, which may well make every friend of domestic virtue tremble.

A voice from the seventeenth century enforces what we have offered.* "As for play-books, and romances, and idle tales, I have already shewed how pernicious they are, especially to youth, and to frothy, empty, idle wits, that know not what a man is, nor what he hath to do in this world. They are powerful baits of the devil, to keep more necessary things out of their minds, and better books out of their hands; and to poison the mind so much the more dangerously, as they are read with more delight and pleasure; and to fill the minds of sensual people with such idle fumes and intoxicating fancies, as may divert them from the serious thoughts of their salvation; and, which is no small loss, to rob them of abundance of that precious time, which was given them for more important business; and which they will wish, and wish again, at last, that they had spent more wisely. I know the fantastics will say that these things are innocent, and may teach men much good; but I shall now only ask them, in the presence of God, first, Whether they should spend that time no better? Secondly, Whether better books and practices would not edify them more? Thirdly, whether the greatest lovers of romances and plays be the greatest lovers of the Book of God, and of a holy life? And fourthly, Whether they feel in themselves, that the love of these vanities doth increase their love to the Word of God, and kill their sin, and prepare them for life to come, or clean contrary?"

* Baxter's Christian Ethics.

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

THEOPHANY, or, the Manifestation of God in the Life, Character and Mission of Jesus Christ. By Rev. Robert Turnbull. Hartford. 1849.

Christianity consists chiefly of facts, — mysterious and supernatural facts, made known to man only through a supernatural revelation. Its claims to belief were at first resisted by brute force and a system of non-intercourse. These obstacles not impeding its progress, philosophy then came in to the aid of the prince of darkness. And as Christ had been "manifested to destroy the works of the devil," so this spirit was manifested in philosophy to defend itself, and to destroy the works of the Son of man. It has attacked both the facts and the doctrines, or the specific and the general facts, asserted in the Bible to be realities. As the basis of our belief in revelation is the plenary inspiration of the record; and as the basis of the system revealed, is, the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, of course, the satanic philosophy has directed its main attacks against these fundamental positions. The battle having now been protracted through nearly eighteen centuries, it seems to us manifest that the whole armory of the enemy is by this time exhausted. We look with peculiar interest to the controversy as it has for some years been advancing in Germany, because there the human mind has exhausted its powers of research, of criticism and of intuitive philosophy, so far as respects the discovery of new weapons in this war. Every position therefore, gained on that battle field, is one gained forever. We find there three parties: one affirming that Christianity and reason are irreconcilable, and therefore Christianity is not truth; another admitting that all attempts to reconcile their conflicting claims are vain, and yet maintaining that Christianity is true; the third affirming that it is true, and therefore ultimately to be harmonized with all the sound principles of philosophy. This class claim for Christianity, that it is perfect; while philosophy is merely in a certain stage of progress, and therefore not in a state to pronounce upon the higher points of the Christian system.

Their rule is indeed, that which now guides the whole scientific world, and which Paley has, for substance, thus stated: "Intel-

Digitized by Google

lectual fortitude consists in never permitting what you do know to be shaken by what you do not know." There is sufficient historical evidence that Christ declared himself to be God: and that his friends and foes believed that he made that declaration. The belief of that truth has been one of the most powerful elements in modern history. It has existed, and wrought, during eighteen hundred years. It has not merely survived many changes, as Islamism has, and as many corrupt forms of Christianity have; it has also been seen in the foreground of all the modern forms of civilization. It is found in harmony with the progress of society, conflicting with nothing but human unbelief. We therefore look to the German controversies with intense interest. The battles in England and New England are now mere skirmishes. Imported German weapons, and generally those that have already become antiquated at home, are all that we have yet seen employed on the Arian and Socinian side of this great question here. It is, then, from the history of the German controversy, that we take encouragement. Because that has been the most profound, and most completely exhaustive; and there the main principles which lie at the foundation of all the philosophical objections, are themselves now brought in question at the bar of reason. The precipitancy, the shallowness, and the arrogance of the sceptical assumptions have been there demonstrated in the fullest manner.

In what precise form the great foundation fact of Christianity is ultimately to be stated, so that it shall find no barrier in the understanding of what the Bible calls "the natural man," or, the man under the control of the natural, and beyond the sphere of the supernatural, we are unable to say. Indeed, we do not know but "the builders" are ever to reject this corner-stone; and that the history of this doctrine is ever going to prove, that "if any man will do God's will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God." In other words, it is by no means certain to us, that the wickedness of the heart in some of its forms, does not necessarily repel this doctrine; by which we do not at all mean to affirm, however, that its reception is a necessary proof of a holy heart. Yet we must confess we look with solicitude upon every form of speculation that does not rigidly adhere to the written Word; but adopts as its ultimate decision on this mysterious doctrine, any view that omits any important class of passages

Digitized by Google

referring to it. The main points of this subject, which we regard the Scriptures as teaching, are the unity of the God-head; the distinction of persons, which lays the foundation for three to be one; the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, being three as such, one as God; the Father was not incarnate, but the Son was; the being Christ Jesus is both God and man, "in two distinct natures and one person forever," as the catechism well expresses it. When, therefore, the manifestation of the Godhead in Christ is compared with its manifestations in nature; and this comparison is made in order to remove the difficulties of the incarnation, we must regard it as betraying the essential element of the doctrine. The difference is so wide, that if any other being than the man Christ Jesus, it matters not how fully God is manifested in him, should receive the worship, homage, love, and confidence which he receives, it would be idolatry; if any other being had assumed the place of man and died for him, there would have been no atoning efficacy in his sufferings and death; nor would any other manifestation of the Deity justify the substitution of the expression: "God was made Gabriel, or angel, or nature, or Paul," for that now employed by the Scriptures: "The Word was made, or became, flesh."

If it be asked, Whether no concessions are to be made to candid scruples, or to an age of advanced illumination? our reply is; We take for ourselves and the world, a whole revelation, or none. The Bible is God's word, or an unmixed imposture. If God has taught us, we must learn, not teach, in his school. Every question in theology is, in fact, a question of interpretation. "To the law and to the testimony." "But are you not affected by the remonstrance of the enlightened reason of man against the intrinsic and essential absurdity of the Trinity and the Incarnation?" As to the absurdity we reply, in words attributed to one in whom common sense seems to be uncommonly developed: "You and I may not understand the arithmetic of heaven." As to the opposition of reason, we find nothing very frightful in it; because it has no unity, no certainty, no oracle. On the contrary, there is not a dogma in any one school of rationalists that somebody has not opposed. Reason has been as strongly developed in those who receive, as in those who reject, this doctrine. We have never seen the special claim of the rationalists to soundness of reason, substantiated. When we see that all the great battles of Chris-

Digitized by Google

tianity have been fought by men who believed this doctrine; that her territories have been enlarged by their exertions; that her struggles with paganism, her self-denying, charitable labors have been performed almost, if not altogether, exclusively by them; and when we see, that the Arian and Socinian labors are always performed when the period of literary ease and worldly honor has succeeded to the din of battle, and the period of worldly sacrifices incidental to the introduction of Christianity, we cannot find ourselves strongly impelled to do much reverence to rationalism. So far as we know its history, it is a parasitic plant, waiting for the full growth of the oak, that it may start up, with soft envelope to gird the old trunk, take on the majesty of its form, smooth the ruggedness of its surface, and pass for the tree, but really to absorb its vital juices. So far as we know its history, it is negative, destructive, and finally, self-destructive; never refusing with Paul, to "boast in another man's line of things, made ready to its hand," but always ready to destroy the very peculiarities of the Christian system, while enjoying the rich incidental benefits which that system has conferred on them who now resist it, as it did on their fathers. Of course, their reason looks on the matter in a totally different light. But so long as our reason contemplates it thus, we cannot find ourselves very profoundly moved to accommodate Christianity and her infallible record to this self-styled enlightened reason.

We call upon the record of reason to shew what she has done for man in his acknowledged urgent necessities. What has she done in the East, and in the ancient days? Two antagonist gods,—Incarnation that annihilates human nature, and Fatalism,—these are her highest achievements. What in Greece, where her power culminated and reached its apex in Plato. Did it bring an almighty helper to man in his conscious weakness, guilt, depravity, and ruin? No; we find nowhere, in all her annals, the description of any thing positive, any thing satisfactory. We cannot find that pagan or Christian philosophers have introduced one element of real, spiritual power to elevate the degraded, to console the wretched, to reunite man to God, and man to man. We indeed turn to ask of the rationalist, if he will account for it that the special power of Christianity is always confined to the ages and the people who seize upon this precise feature of it; and we challenge him to bring his missionary history, his record of revivals and

Digitized by Google

reformations, his history of new ground broken; of vicious districts reclaimed; of hearers "pricked in the heart," crying: "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" of people "taking joyfully the spoiling of their gods," for the sake of a good man who had gone to the gibbet for them. It may be in our ignorance that we make such appeals; and it may be but furnishing a brilliant opportunity for bringing forth what will speak more for rationalism, human reason, and its theology, than all we have ever yet seen or heard in it, or about it.

We deemed it necessary thus to speak for ourselves, while introducing Mr. Turnbull, already so favorably known for his valuable contributions to our literature. He has here done a good work, because he has stated, and ably defended, the essential positions of this great doctrine. But the aim of his work being popular instruction, rather than thorough discussion, one can scarcely consent to merely echo his valuable sayings, without adding something by way of independent testimony.

This work is timely; bringing to view clearly and faithfully this vital element of the Christian system; discussing it in a conciliatory spirit, and yet, without any compromise. The style of Mr. Turnbull is more than agreeable, uniformly; and frequently rises into strains of great beauty and grandeur. He will not expect us to endorse his interpretation of the passages in Romans and Colossians, concerning our burial with Christ in baptism. We know they are cardinal texts with our brethren who make immersion essential to baptism. But we think their hinge must be broken under the blows of a thorough criticism. And he will suffer us, while in the vein of minute criticism, to suggest that he has asserted, on page 126, just what he meant to deny. His language is: "That *one* is not *three*, nor *three one*, in every possible sense, especially in a common, obvious, and, above all, arithmetical or mathematical sense, no man who reveres the word of God, can admit." Did he not mean to say "deny" instead of "admit"? And we would suggest, moreover, that some proof should be offered to sustain the remark, that the primary idea of the English word *atonement* is that of *expiation*, or *satisfaction*.

We were looking through the work, for some reference to recent handlings of this great theme in our own neighborhood, and supposed we found them here:

Digitized by Google

"Others, again, admit that the sufferings of Christ are vicarious and substitutionary, but only in appearance and form; that the atonement is a manifestation of the Divine love issuing in the transformation of the sinner, but not, as we contend, a sacrifice for sin.* They find, indeed, a sacrificial or expiatory character in the mere outward form, or, what has been called the *liturgical* aspect of the doctrine; but what is this, when separated from its reality or essence? The atonement is either an *expiation*, or *not*. If an expiation or a sacrifice for sin, it is such in its very nature and essence, not simply in its outward form or figurative representation. The form or liturgy, that is, the ritual and outward representation of a doctrine, to be good for anything, must correspond with its inward spirit. Otherwise the form deceives us! If the atonement or expiation is only in the words, or in the ritual, figurative aspect of the doctrine, not in the doctrine itself, it is *nothing*, — at least nothing tangible. The whole thing is a play upon words, and leaves the matter precisely where it was."

The work contains two parts. In the first, the life of Christ is described in a very interesting manner; and in the second, the character and mission of Christ. We give one fair specimen of Mr. Turnbull's book. On the relations of the Godhead to the sufferings of Christ, he has taken the position generally rejected by theologians; but recently defended with ability, in an anonymous work, published in New York.

We give the following specimen of Mr. Turnbull's book:

"But let God reveal himself in a nature like our own, and in that nature go forth to control all worlds, to quicken the dead, to regenerate the soul, and instantly we gain a conception of his majesty which overwhelms us. Let us behold him in the face of Jesus, radiant with the light of a boundless, unutterable love, and both our intellect and our heart humble themselves before the adorable mystery. Here is a Being we can understand and appreciate, moving and acting among ourselves, full of majesty and power, controlling the winds and the waves, healing the sick, raising the dead, regulating the world of spirits, overmastering the powers of evil, conquering death and the grave, and fully assuming the place of eternal and universal dominion. And yet, with all this power and supremacy, full of mercy and good fruits, infinite in love and compassion, blessing all, saving all; a man, with the heart and soul of a man, yet a God confessed, with all the might and majesty of a God; so that in gazing upon his glorified face, through which the whole Deity is shining, we exclaim, with an ancient prophet: 'This God is my God, I have waited for him; this God is my God, I will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.'"

* "This is the view of Schleiermacher and some of the German theologians. It is also the view of Coleridge and his followers."

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

REMARKS ON THE PAST, AND ITS LEGACIES TO AMERICAN SOCIETY. "Westward the Star of Empire takes its way." By J. D. Nourse, Louisville, Ky. 1849.

MR. NOURSE, formerly a member of the Kentucky bar, has here written a very sensible book, on a very important subject. The title and the style we should be disposed to amend. The latter can hardly escape the charge of turgidness; and the excess of italicized words is painful to the eye. The scope of the work is, to mark the rise and progress of the several elements of modern civilization; which is done with more than ordinary ability.

But we could hardly maintain our theological integrity, did we suffer to pass unnoticed the following remark. He says: "There is no substantial distinction, such, at least, as the human mind is capable of apprehending, between the doctrine of Arius, and that of the Nicene Council." That Arius did not follow out his principles to their legitimate results, in regard to all other doctrines depending on that of the person of Christ, we can concede. But we cannot admit that his views do not involve a fundamental difference, by logical necessity, between Arianism and the gospel, in its most vital doctrines. And even that Arius and the Council of Nice did not differ on a point vital to the gospel, and comprehensible by ordinary minds too, we know not how so intelligent and fair a writer can assert. The language of Arius is: "The son (of God) is not unbegotten, nor a portion of the unbegotten, in any manner." "The Son had a beginning, but God was without a beginning. He is not a portion of God." He does indeed qualify all this; but it is in such a way as to make really two Gods; "for, he (the son) was *never* unbegotten." Thus Arius would make two eternal existences, of different natures. This is heaven-wide from the Nicene creed, in its amplitude of discrimination and declaration, which says: "We believe in the Son of God," — "of the substance of the Father," — "of the same substance with the Father." Surely this is the difference between either God and a creature; or, one God and two Gods. It is a distinction so "substantial," as to be easily apprehended by the human mind.

Digitized by Google

Among the prominent wants of this country, is an enlightened regard for the past. And we are cheered by this additional evidence that history is going to become a study in this republic; and that the love of it has taken root on the banks of the Ohio. High churchmen, infidels, and tory historians have retarded this noble study, by insisting on the authority of tradition; and holding up the past as containing the glorious days of perfect kings, and happy ignorance. They have forced the friends of freedom to turn away the public mind from the past, and fill it with hopes of the future. But this is an extreme, from which we must return. And it is wonderful that the idolaters who worshipped every image, but those of Freedom and true Heroism, should have permitted so many documents to remain unburned, which are now changing the whole character of history. What an unveiling of sainted tyrants within twenty years; what a reversal of Jacobin verdicts! History is now becoming a potent auxiliary of every noble sentiment, every right principle; the indispensable weapon in every battle for truth and freedom. It seems to us to be almost as impossible that Providence should suffer all its own acts for the last thousand years to perish out of the human memory, as that it should suffer the Bible to perish. Without the records of science, men would always remain children in the arts. And without the records of Providence, men must remain children in all the great arts of government and social life. The history of the arts is naturally preserved by their monuments, and by the constant demands made by the lower wants of life.

But the history of mind, men, and principles, the most important of all, easily fades from the memory. The more effort consequently is needed to preserve it, and to keep it before the minds of men.

It gives us the more pleasure to notice this work by Mr. Nourse, because it is native and Western; and especially because it is not likely, from the modesty of the author, and the remoteness of its birth-place, to receive due attention from the Eastern public.

His work consists of four parts, — The Cross, — Night and Morning, — Spiritual Despotism and the Reformation, — The Anglo-Normans, or Law and Liberty. Its scope is to trace, somewhat after the manner of M. Guizot, the rise, progress, and transmission of the main elements of modern civilization. It

Digitized by Google

presents a very just picture of the growth of the human mind, considered as one; and of human institutions, regarded as its outer integuments.

The Cross embraces the whole of revealed religion, because that is its moral centre. "I say nothing," he remarks, "of the doctrines of Christianity. It is not my province. But the divinity of Christ, his life and death, and the purport of both, are not mere dogmas; they are facts or they are fables. If it be true that the Divine Word has descended from heaven, clothed himself in human nature, became the second representative of the human family, and quenched in his own blood the flaming sword of inexorable law; if he has gone before us as our elder brother through shame, and poverty, and sorrow, and death, to be crowned the conqueror of our last enemy, and ascend on high, leading captivity captive, it is plain that here are facts, in comparison with which all other facts are insignificant. In comparison with this glorious embodiment of the poetry of religion, what are all the speculations of philosophy, what are all the cold calculations of prudential morality! On these facts, as an eloquent writer has observed, the world may be said to have had its foundation for nearly two thousand years, and in them we must look for the chief source of the peculiar glories and advantages of the Christian civilization. Surely it is worth while for every man to give these facts an earnest and impartial examination. If the gospel history be even substantially true, it is infinitely the most important part of history; properly the central, and loftiest point, from which all history should be looked at."

Night and Morning exhibits the wonderful phases of the Christian era, in which he finds gradually developed several grand elements. The first is liberty. "The Roman empire had done its allotted work, in laying a deep and broad foundation for the Christian civilization; and now the deadening unity of an absolute despotism was to give place to tumultuous life, to spontaneity, to liberty." This of course, he traces to the German tribes. Religion then conquers the barbarians, after they have conquered Christian Rome. Monachism has its place and its part to act. The Cities and their Bishops come next in order. Then the Arabs, Feudalism; Chivalry, which he calls "the martial enthusiasm of the terrible warriors of Germany, refined by the poetry of the Arabs, and exalted by the great moral ideas derived from

Digitized by Google

Christianity;" Woman, as emancipated and elevated by Christianity, the Crusades; Commerce; Poetry; Language; the Universities; Scholasticism; these are the great powers and instruments, by which Providence prepared the world for the next era. We coincide totally with Mr. Nourse in his judgment, contrary to the opinion of M. Guizot that woman owes her present elevation to feudalism. The power which wrought this great social change, he well observes, "was the unobtrusive agency of the Christian religion."

In the next department of his work, entitled *Spiritual Despotism and the Reformation*, Mr. Nourse makes the most candid concessions to the papacy of the early and middle ages. To qualify his concessions, as we might desire to do, would carry us too far at this time. He has said the best things for the best of the pontiffs that the case admits. "The spirit of the papal policy was originally great and magnanimous. That intentionally or unintentionally it did much in those early ages for the cause of civilization, will not be denied." No, we would add, it cannot be denied. And all protestant as we are, it gladdens us when we can light upon a verdant spot in the desert of that wilderness, the history of the popes. "But," he adds, "the possessors of absolute power are apt to forget the purposes for which it was acquired." Aye! and sure, as well as apt. He regards the Reformation as ceasing to be a moral power as soon as it becomes political in its spirit and measures. The Roman church, he admits, once countenanced freedom of inquiry; but now dreads it as her most formidable foe. And "whether Protestantism admits of a conservative form, which can unite moral power with freedom of opinion," he regards as "one of the great problems of the age."

The fourth article, entitled; *the Anglo-Normans, or Law and Liberty*, is altogether the most original and compact portion of the work. It exhibits the great result of English history for the last three centuries to be, the establishing of popular rights. "It was in England that the two great antagonists of modern society first fairly confronted each other, and the first effective blows were struck in that battle between power and liberty, not yet ended, of which the English, the American and the French revolutions have been the most terrible and bloody encounters." The author appears not to see with M. Guizot's optics, in regard

Digitized by Google

to the superiority of French civilization. The contest between France and England has been during a long period, not only for political supremacy, but also "for the foremost place in the civilization of mankind." Our author awards the palm to the Anglo-Normans; of whom he says, they are everywhere "the torch-bearers of religion, science, liberty. Each Christian nation has had a share in the providential education of mankind." — "The English," he adds, "have excelled in everything that requires good sense and practical sagacity; but, if I mistake not, the great mission of the Anglo-Saxons is, to solve this highest problem of political philosophy; *the reconciliation of order and liberty.*"

The conclusion of the discussion is thus reached: "American society, then, may be regarded as the net product of the whole past, eliminated from those terms, which, though useful in working out the problem, must be cancelled to obtain the result." — "Our constitution was a compromise, not only between slave-holding and non-slave-holding societies, between centralization and state-rights, but also between progress and conservatism. The American statesmen did not, like the French Jacobins, aspire to build a political edifice out of flimsy abstractions. They did not attempt to create, but merely to construct, with material ready to their hands. With principles as old as Magna Charta, institutions to which the people had long been accustomed, and the new quality growing out of the peculiar circumstances of American society, they went to work in a spirit of compromise, and constituted a glorious temple of constitutional liberty."

We take our leave of a very intelligent and entertaining companion, when we have heard his closing words of exhortation to his countrymen; "Here civilization may attain its most glorious triumphs, if we give to genius, wisdom and learning their due regard, if we place virtue and intelligence above wealth and office; if we preserve that only true liberty which is consistent with a lofty morality, with wholesome laws, with justice to all and each; if we look back upon the mighty past, not with self-complacent contempt, but with that discriminating veneration which may take warning from its errors, and emulate its greatness; if last, though not least, we cling to that most precious of all its legacies, of which the cross is the seal, and the Bible is the record, duly attested by the providence of God."

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

PRAYER-MEETINGS. — All intense emotions burn to impart themselves. To be in sympathy with such as are like-minded, is necessary to human happiness. No man can keep all to himself that which occupies his whole soul. Be it a secret of love or murder, it must come out. And this is true especially of the religious sentiment, the most powerful of all the passions man can feel. There is a craving for communion with God, and with men who are like God, bearing his image and breathing his spirit. Necessity is laid upon them; — they must assemble themselves together, that they may feel themselves in a congenial atmosphere. And not only must they give vent to their pent-up emotions in the prayers, and praises, and privileges of the great congregation; but they must impart their sentiments still more freely in the less formal and restrained meeting for Christian conference. This is the origin of prayer-meetings. — This view is sustained by facts. Take that oldest and best of all ecclesiastical histories, the Acts of the Apostles; and see how, from the beginning, the disciples were wont to meet in upper chambers, coming together "all with one accord in one place," to call unitedly upon the name of the Lord. And ever since that time, in all places where there has been any spiritual life and activity, there social meetings for prayer have been frequent. Perhaps no scenes can be more tedious and tasteless to the man of the world; but the sincere disciple finds in them the sweetest and purest happiness, and there drinks with joy from the river of God's pleasures. Thus it was in the earliest days of New England. Mather tells us, in his Magnalia, published in 1702, that "in the beginning of the country, devout Christians had their private meetings, wherein they would seek the face, and sing the praise of God, and *confer* upon some questions of practical religion for their mutual edification; *and the country is still full of these little meetings.*" At this day, the country is more full of these "conference" seasons than ever. And though they are far from being so fully attended as were to be wished, yet we do not hesitate to say that we do not believe that there is an orthodox church anywhere in New England, however small or scattered, but feels that at least one such stated meeting from week to week, and from year to year, is indispensable to its religious comfort, and even to its existence.

If now there are large denominations among us, which have no such general system of prayer and conference-meetings, kept up by the constant sense of spiritual necessities; or which, when a measure of the kind is adopted, sees it thronged as a curious novelty, while all the country around is laid under contribution for the more devout ministers and laymen to sustain the interest of the occasion, and even the secular prints give regular reports of the exercises; — if there be such denominations, ought not either fact to suggest to them the most solemn reflections? In all kindness, we would ask, What ought they to think of their own spiritual state, and of the scheme of doctrines by which that state is produced?

Digitized by Google

MARGARET SMITH'S JOURNAL. — Here is a volume, purporting to be a portion of the diary of a young lady, who visited several places in the Province of Massachusetts Bay in 1678 – 9. Though liable to many minor criticisms, this little fiction is written with abundance of talent, and contains many pleasing passages. But it is from the pen of one in whom the antiquated Quaker grudge rankles in all its acridness, under a doublet of the smoothest and neatest drab, a beaver of the broadest brim, and a visage expressive only of the blandest benevolence. Coleridge has well compared the "Friends" to a volcano in a mountain of ice. No other men ever had such a godly way of doing an ungodly thing! The writer before us paints most of the old Puritans in this land as a set of persecuting demons, while the cunning followers of old Fox are delineated as angels of mercy and goodness. It is very unfortunate for the memory of our fathers, that they despised the Quaker invectives of their day, too much to answer their railing pamphlets. These pamphlets teem with atrocious slanders against our ancient ministers and magistrates, which those worthies regarded as too absurd for belief, and too contemptible to call for refutation. Hence, for the most part, but one side of the story has reached us. The slanders remain, written as they were under the promptings of exasperated prejudice and bitter disappointment. The Puritan version of the story, with slight exceptions, has not fully come down to us. And now the frantic effusions of the Quakers, which in their time were deemed unworthy of notice, are exhumed from lumber-lofts and antiquarian dust-heaps, and quoted by Bancroft, and some who pretend to write history, as documents of unquestionable authority. No doubt but the Quakers, in the excitement they produced by their senseless and outrageous proceedings, suffered, in some instances, unjustly; but, usually, they were punished for such breaches of the public peace and order, as are at this day chastised by the laws of our commonwealth, and which the present generation of Quakers would condemn as decidedly as our fathers did. When George Fox accused our fathers of persecution in punishing those who disturbed public worship, insulted courts of justice while in session, and even perambulated the streets in a state of nudity, our ancestors did not feel themselves called to repel such an accusation. Roger Williams, indeed, in his book called "George Fox digged out of his Burrows," volunteers to vindicate "the people of the Bay" from that accusation; and surely *he* is an unexceptionable witness in their favor, on a point like this, where he could have no extreme partiality for their side.

DR. DE WETTE. — This divine was banished from Prussia, many years since, on account of his radicalism in politics and his neologism in polemics. He has since resided in Switzerland, as a professor in the University of Basle. He is regarded as one of the most distinguished of living scholars, in the departments of sacred antiquities, and of the philology of either Testament. The readers of that invaluable work, the Bibliotheca Sacra, must have noticed with interest a translation from De Wette's Commentary on a part of the fifth chapter of Romans, made by Professor Stuart, and published in

Digitized by Google

May, 1848. By a thorough interpretation of this much-contested passage, De Wette derives from it the doctrine of *original* sin, in its Old-Lutheran form of *inherited* sin, or "the original likeness of all men, by virtue of which the sin of Adam becomes common to all, and sin propagated or inherited is still the free act of every man."

The following passage, we translate from the Preface to the last part of his New Testament Manual, being a condensed exposition of the Apocalypse, and dated June 20th, 1848. It is very remarkable as coming from one who has long been exiled as a dangerous radical, and a secret foe of religion. It would indicate a strong reaction, as he grows older and wiser, toward sound and salutary principles. As to his remark that the predictions in the Apocalypse do not reach down to the present day, we would only suggest, that though that wonderful book may not reflect a special distinct picture of the present state of German Protestantism, yet even this is certainly comprehended among the last transformations of the Church; and "the prophetic vision of John" discerns, beyond the disorders of our times, the final victory of the Church. Here is the passage:

"I began this work amid the arming for the civil war in Switzerland, and pursued it uninterruptedly when the throne of France fell, and while the thrones of Germany were tottering; and I finished it while anarchy was extending itself, and black thunder-clouds arose over the people. I thank God for the peace of mind he granted me; but thoughts of the destiny that awaited us, and probably the Church also, accompanied almost every line I penned. I could not refrain from descrying, in this our time, the antichrist depicted by John, although in altered shape, and in yet darker features. The self-deification of the Romish antichrist appears to me like child's play, as compared with the God-denying, unbelieving, supercilious, all-unbridled, *egoism* of our day. And what is a corporeal persecution of the Christian faith with fire and sword, compared with the dissolute Young-Hegel dialectics, or in comparison with the flatteries and foolings of the so-called love of freedom, which springs from the vilest internal slavery, and leads the poor people into inward and outward servitude? According to the counsel of those who claim to take the lead of public sentiment, the State should cast off the Christian principle, and establish itself on the ground of Indifferentism, if not of absolute Atheism. What a stride toward a new and unexampled barbarism! For in the American Union, where the State takes a similar stand, the statesmen at least are Christians, and for the most part zealous Christians.

"In my labors upon the Apocalypse, I have not learned how to prophesy; and the prophetic vision of John reached not down to our times. Hence I know not what the destiny of our beloved Protestant Churches will be. Only this I know, that in no other name is there salvation, but in the name of Jesus Christ, the Crucified; — and that there is nothing higher for human kind, than the Godmanhood realized in him, and the kingdom of heaven planted by him; — an idea and a problem, which have never yet been rightly recognized and brought to life, not even by those who may be properly regarded as the warmest and most zealous Christians. If Christ were in deed

Digitized by Google

and truth our Life, how could such a desertion of him be possible? Those in whom he lives, would, throughout their whole life, in word, writ, and act, testify for him so powerfully, that unbelief must be struck dumb."

THE HISTORIES OF TACITUS. — This second volume of the surviving works of the sagacious Roman, is edited, like the former, by Professor Tyler, of Amherst College. In giving the highest commendations to this work, we speak not at random. That famous reviewer, Rev. Sydney Smith, facetiously remarks, that it is very desirable that the critic should never read the books he notices, because this might destroy his impartiality! We have lost this means of forming an unbiassed judgment, not having "read the book by the fingers," as the phrase is; but having deliberately eyed every word, except the index and the large advertising pamphlet which the booksellers have, very unsuitably, bound up with the volume. Even this last appendix we might have glanced at, if the publishers had not so often favored us with the sight of it in the same exceptionable way. It has ceased to have the charm of novelty. — As to Caius Cornelius Tacitus, he has long been regarded as the father of philosophical history. He is no mechanical annalist, whose tasteless toil consists in binding up his fagots of dry facts, and piling them up in heaps just fit for the baker's oven. His truly historic spirit penetrates to the motives of men, and the hidden causes of events; and his style, so condensed and pregnant, renders him at once one of the most difficult and the most instructive of the Latin classics. No writer more needs a keen commentator, or better deserves one. And the "manes" of the old Roman ought to be very much obliged to the Amherst professor, for furnishing him with such invaluable means for a higher appreciation of him by posterity. We cannot but sigh over the lost books of The Histories of Tacitus, of which what now remains to us breaks off at that most interesting period of ancient history, the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. How precious would be the account of that unparalleled tragedy, given in the concise descriptions of "that historian, who," as Montesquieu says, "abridged every thing, because he saw every thing." Let us not despair of yet recovering this treasure. The Roman emperor Tacitus, supposed to be a descendant of the historian, and who flourished nearly two centuries after him, had copies of his writings placed in all the libraries of the empire, and required the scribes to make ten copies every year. Time, in devouring these copies, has done himself great injustice. The most complete manuscript known to be in existence, was found in a Westphalian monastery, long ago. Perhaps other convents may, ere long, be broken up; and, among their concealed spoils, these, and other missing treasures of antiquity, may be brought to light. — We cannot conceive of a more thorough and strengthening discipline of the mind, in training it to hard thinking and concise speaking, than the careful perusal of Tacitus. This is the grand benefit of classical study, which, for such a purpose, is far superior to mathematical research.

Digitized by Google

EMBARKATION OF MESSRS. JUDSON AND NEWELL, A. D., 1812. — This was one of the most important events in the history of modern American missions. Dr. Judson, who was sent forth as a Congregationalist, still survives, in high esteem with the Baptist churches, to which he has long been attached. During his recent visit to this country, he made, as we learn by the highest authority among the Baptists, certain statements very derogatory to the Christian zeal and affections of Rev. Dr. Worcester, of Salem, the first Secretary of the A. B. C. F. M., and the other early friends of the missionary cause in that region. These statements having been widely circulated, at last appeared in a more definite shape in the Christian Review, a Baptist Quarterly, published in this city. The editor of that work, in a very commendable spirit of fairness and justice, has inserted in the March number an overwhelming reply by the son of Dr. Worcester, and his successor in the ministry at Salem. We rejoice in this thorough and timely vindication of a body of men as holy, courageous, and self-denying as have ever been enrolled under the missionary standard. The promise still holds good to Zion: "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." The statements imputed to Dr. Judson by his admirers are utterly false as to matters of fact which he must have fully known. We can only hope, in all charity, that he was wholly misunderstood or misrepresented by those who have undertaken to report his assertions; or else that his memory of those distant transactions is sadly confused and inaccurate. If he could knowingly and wilfully, as well as thanklessly and falsely, cast such odium upon the sainted dead, (which, as yet, we are altogether unwilling to believe,) he is certainly the last man who could be trusted to give to the heathen a faithful translation of the Book of Truth.

ROGER WILLIAMS. — The article in our last number, on this famous man, has drawn forth another grievous comment from our esteemed brethren of the Christian Watchman. That comment, like all attempts of able men to maintain a bad cause, is made up of furtive evasions of the points at issue, and *cutting* remarks adapted to discourage us from pursuing the subject any further. This sort of proceeding reminds us of the Chinese burglars, who braid pieces of broken glass into their long cues, so that when chased by the policeman, they may not be seized by that very inviting, but dangerous appendage. Nevertheless, we shall be after our fugitive friends, and try to hold them by some other handle to the stubborn facts of the case. We had said, that, among other groundless claims which his admirers had set up in favor of Williams, was that of being the first who wrote in behalf of liberty of conscience. To prove that this claim is not set up, the Watchman quotes a stray sermon printed at Providence ten years ago. Yet that very sermon expressly and handsomely confutes certain eulogists of Williams, for making this very claim in his behalf! By this singular self-contradiction, the Watchman is condemned out of its own mouth. — The editors of that paper wisely take no notice of the passage we cited from John Quincy Adams, in which that champion of liberality and freedom vindicates

Digitized by Google

our fathers for banishing Williams as a "nuisance." But by way of off-set to this, we have two flourishes of rhetoric, of the stereotype stamp, which escaped from the flowing pens of Judge Story and Mr. Bancroft.

Our keen friends of the Watchman seem to think that we, their brethren of the Observatory, are far behind the Providence patriarch in our ideas of toleration. This is really cruel upon us, for we honestly think that we have made considerable advance upon his position. In his strange book with the punning title, "George Fox digg'd out of his Burrowes," Williams severely censures the Quakers for their want of "civil respect." He is particularly shocked at their familiar use of "thee" and "thou," in addressing their superiors. He says: "*I have therefore publickly declared my self, that a due and moderate restraint and punishing of these incivilities (though pretending Conscience,) is as far from persecution, (properly so called,) as that it is a Duty and Command of God unto all mankinde, first in Families, and thence unto all mankinde Societies.*" Page 200. Oh Roger, Roger! Is this thine absolute "soul-liberty," — "due and moderate restraint and punishing" of thy poor Quaker friends, who conscientiously used *thee* and *thou*, in an age when *thee* and *thou* were vastly more common than now? What wouldest thou have done to them for their greater peccadilloes, had the power been given thee? — The Watchman discreetly passes by the fact we alleged, that Williams's colony refused its franchise to Roman Catholics, while the papist colony at Maryland were admitting Baptists and Quakers to that privilege. No marvel that, in the big quarto which George Fox and some of his subalterns wrote against Williams, entitled "A New England Fire-Brand Quenched," Williams is railed at many scores of times for being as "vile a persecutor" as any of the Puritan magistrates of Massachusetts. They accuse him of a "bloodthirsty spirit," and of "an impious spirit that seeks to murther the innocent." "Oh, murtherous man," say they, "that hath not any remorse for thy long-lived wickedness!" The Quakers fairly buried their supposed benefactor under piles of abuse, after they had poisoned his old age by ceaseless wrongs and insults.

Our opinion of him is, that he was a sincerely good man, so far as a "Come-outer" could be, whom it is the modern fashion to praise extravagantly for what he did, and still more for what he never thought of doing. We have no objection, however, to our Baptist brethren's admiring him to their heart's content, if they would not claim for him a superiority to the Puritans, which, on the whole, is historically false; and if they would not make sectarian capital out of his factitious celebrity. Their best men know that he forsook the Baptists in three months after his immersion, and never communed with them, and rarely, if ever, worshipped with them; and for the last forty years of his life, denied that they had any true churches, ministers, or sacraments. Their convert does them little honor. If he were now living, they would surely banish him from their sect, if not from their commonwealth. He did not think half so well of them as we do.

Digitized by Google

MONTHLY RECORD.

The Independent. — This new paper of the Congregationalists at New York is sustained with much ability, and, we trust, with increasing success. We notice some remarks in a late number on dignity and courteousness of language in speaking of others; — with a slight hint to the former Editor of the Observatory. We infer that such forms of speech as the Liberator, and, formerly, the Emancipator, for example, have sanctioned, will never be allowed in that print. Indeed, its corps of Editors contains one, who, from his peculiar experience, affords the hope that the paper will never fall to the level of ordinary newspapers in this respect.

Death of Miss Mary Lyon. — Few events of this nature could awaken so much emotion through a large community as the departure of this servant of God. Her whole life was religiously tuned, but made the sweetest music at the close. With no adventitious aids from birth and connections, with no graces of person, speech, or pen; but with a strong and energetic mind entirely given up to one grand object, she has been a most useful instrument of the gracious purposes of God. She was one of the peculiar products of Christianity. No other religion has produced a character in the slightest degree resembling hers; and even Christianity has produced but few to compare with her. She was devoted to the religious education of her sex, thousands of whom rise up to call her blessed.

Licences in Boston. — The aldermen of this city deserve a reputation entirely distinct from that which has heretofore sportively characterized men of their office. However it may be as to mock-turtle, the *wine*, which is a mocker, seems to be in some disfavor with them. An application was made for a tavern-licence, including the privilege of selling intoxicating drinks. This application was backed by all the influence of his Honor the Mayor, who is sincerely, but inexcusably, deluded on this point. But the entire Board voted to refuse the petition. Of such Aldermen there cannot be too much! May their weight never be lighter, and their shadows never be less! Boston is still the most puritanical city of its size on earth.

Letter of Hon. Henry Clay. — The open accession, as some will deem it, of this distinguished and influential statesman to the cause of emancipation, is a sign of the times. Slave-holding, that huge and inert mass of oppression, is at last decidedly tottering to its fall. In due time, its downfall will become rapid and resistless; and the whole enormous mass roll off from the bosom of our fair land, into the abyss which engulfs all effete and exploded delusions. Some will say, that Mr. Clay's scheme of emancipation is impracticable, and that it only illustrates the rigorous spirit of slave-holding. Though this may be true, we say again, that it is an important sign of the times, that such a man as Mr. Clay feels impelled to consider the termination of slavery as an event to be desired, and in some way to be effected.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. H. SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] MAY, 1849. [No. 5.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ADNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Future Punishment,	193
Gog and Magog,	202
Freedom of Speaking and Printing,	205
Thoughts on Reading,	212
Correspondence on Missions,	216
The Monthly Concert,	225
William Penn,	229
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Polemical and Practical Religion,	237
Macaulay's History of England,	238
Death of Dr. Wegscheider,	239
Pamphlets,	239
Ordinations, Installations, etc.,	240

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office nine dollars, shall receive six copies of the Christian Observatory for one year.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863, Sept. 11.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. MAY, 1849. No. 5.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

ONE of the most striking characteristics of the present age is an increase of infidelity as it regards the future eternal punishment of the wicked. This is undoubtedly an effort of the depraved heart, to throw off a sense of accountability to God, and to introduce a kind of practical atheism, which shall give to the wicked a license to trample under foot the law of God, unterrified by his threatenings of the wrath to come.

This effect is undoubtedly increased by the increasing influence of divine truth upon the public sentiment of the community. As light increases, the wicked are compelled to involve themselves in a deeper shade of unbelief, lest the effulgence of truth should rebuke their ungodly deeds with intolerable severity, and fill their consciences with forebodings of coming woe, and urge their obligations to abandon their sins and escape without delay from impending wrath.

But though these are the radical causes of this increase of unbelief, yet because numbers are guilty of the crime, and some of them men of learning, and even nominally ambassadors of Christ, some have been led to conclude that, after all, the certainty of the future endless punishment of the wicked is not so clear as has been supposed. It is possible, say they, that the Bible has been misinterpreted on this point. It may refer to a punishment in this life; or to a limited remedial punishment; or perhaps those texts which have been claimed as teaching the future redemption of all men, do teach it; or perhaps the Bible

Digitized by Google

is not true. In these and other forms, a secret poison of infidelity steals through the community, fatal to a firm belief of the certain execution of God's threatenings against the finally impenitent; and thus destroying that conviction of the absolute necessity of repentance and of faith in Christ in order to escape eternal death, without which the Gospel itself is of no effect.

We need then to trace this infidelity to its true cause, and exhibit it in its appropriate colors. And this we take occasion to do, by referring to a people among whom the depravity of the human heart did produce a disregard of threatenings so clearly expressed, that to misunderstand them was impossible; and uttered in such circumstances, that there could be no possible reason to doubt that they would be fulfilled. By observing the operation of the human heart in a case so striking as this, we shall be enabled to discover and develop its operations in producing the infidelity of the present age.

We propose to consider the threatenings addressed to the Jews. They were threatenings of temporal punishments. God has, in all ages, governed all men as a moral governor, in view of eternity, and so he did the Jewish nation. But to them he also sustained a peculiar relation, as a temporal governor. He redeemed them from Egypt, and entered into a solemn covenant with them to be their God and King; and he regulated all their civil, social, and religious duties, by numerous laws clearly and definitely expressed. And to these, temporal rewards and punishments were attached. These sanctions were not removed to a distant futurity. But reward here followed obedience, and punishment trod upon crime.

God threatened to employ the elements of the natural world, and the surrounding nations, as the executioners of his vengeance. He has at all times an entire control of the natural world, and of the movements of nations. But he does not always exercise it for the purpose of inflicting temporal punishments. But with this nation he threatened to do it. He held over their head this rod of vengeance, and threatened to smite them in all their temporal interests, if they should violate their covenant and break his laws. He reminded them, that at any moment he could scourge them with famine, blasting, mildew, pestilence, and every form of disease; that all the springs of national prosperity were in his hand; that he was their only defender

Digitized by Google

against surrounding nations; and that by a word he could bring upon them all the miseries of war, captivity, and death. And he threatened to use this power with the utmost severity, if they violated their national obligations to him.

God had given such indications of his power and disposition to execute such threatenings, as removed all ground of unbelief. How had he summoned all the elements, and opened all his magazines of wrath, to chastise the haughty king of Egypt! How had he terrified the nations by his vengeance on this tyrant, when he buried him and his hosts in the same sea which he had divided by his almighty power for the redemption of his people! And what signs and wonders did he exhibit during their march through the wilderness! When they were obedient, how easily did he scatter their enemies. When disobedient, how severely did he punish them by pestilence, or fiery serpents, or earthquakes. Besides, in their hands were the records of God's ancient deeds of vengeance. The memory of the flood had not faded away, and the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah, still before their eyes, uttered a warning voice, and bade them beware of arousing again the dreadful justice of God.

There was nothing obscure in the annunciation of any of the laws of God, or of the penalties annexed to them. The language used could not possibly have more than one meaning. There was no mode of explaining it away by figurative interpretation. When God forbade idolatry, and a participation in the licentious indulgences connected with the worship of heathen gods, and commanded his people to avoid all the abominations of the heathen, and to be a holy people unto himself, they could not misunderstand his meaning. And there could be no dispute about the meaning of famine, or pestilence, or defeat in war, or violent death, or miserable captivity among cruel and insulting enemies. There was no possible way of evading the plain and obvious meaning of the threatenings of God.

The calamities threatened were very great. Probably there is not in the whole compass of language such a terrific array of temporal calamities, as is recorded in those parts of the book of Deuteronomy which contain the threatenings of God against his people in case of disobedience. The whole power of language seems to be exhausted. In the most intense colors, God exhibits his power to bless; and in shades of awful darkness, his power

Digitized by Google

to curse. "If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law, that are written in this book, that thou mayst fear this glorious and fearful name THE LORD THY GOD; then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance. — And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other; — and among these nations shall thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." No denunciations could be more plain or terrible.

God used various and powerful means to infix deeply in the minds of his people the remembrance of those threatenings. He did not merely record them by Moses, and give them into the hands of the people. But he endeavored to impress them distinctly upon their minds. He commanded Moses before his death to assemble all the nation, and publicly rehearse all his dealings with them, and to strive to affect them with a sense of the value of his favor, and the awful consequences of his displeasure. He required them, after entering the promised land, publicly to recite the blessings and curses of the law, on the mountains Ebal and Gerizim, and to call upon all the people to say Amen. He commanded Moses also to prepare a song to be handed down from generation to generation, rehearsing the benefits of God to that nation, and exhibiting with all the power of language, the terrors of his threatened vengeance upon the disobedient. He also warned them against false prophets, should they arise in future ages; and charged the whole nation, kings, rulers, priests, and prophets, never to forget the law of Moses, but to consult it in all cases of importance. He enjoined it on parents to teach these things to their children, and established public festivals, by which the males of the nation should three times a year be assembled at Jerusalem for his worship, and for instruction; and he provided for the public reading of the law at appointed times.

Digitized by Google

In reviewing this account of the threatenings of God, one can hardly conceive it possible that any thing could be made more certain to the human mind, than it must have been to the Jewish nation, that God would without fail, visit every transgression and disobedience with a just recompense of reward. It might almost seem as if these threatenings would restrain the nation by compulsive power, and as if unbelief could find no avenue of access to the mind. But it need not be told, that the fact was notoriously otherwise. The whole nation was ultimately ruined by unbelief, and was actually exposed to the unmitigated wrath of God, till they drank deep the cup of woe, and every threatening of the law was fulfilled. We now proceed to inquire into the causes of this astonishing unbelief. And here we need not delay long. For these radical causes are few, simple, and easily stated.

The first was a dislike of the restraints imposed by the law of God, and a desire to enjoy unmolested, those sinful indulgences which were commonly enjoyed by the worshippers of idol gods. The true God is the only god who has ever required purity of heart and life in his worshippers, and forbidden all sinful indulgences on pain of his high displeasure. But all systems of idolatry throw off the restraints of holiness; and tolerate, and often sanction, the vilest crimes. Such was the case with the idolatrous Canaanites, and with the surrounding heathen nations. God speaks of these nations and of their practices in terms of the deepest detestation.

But that which is abominable to God, is often attractive to a depraved heart. The sinful indulgences of the heathen were so to the unholy Jews. The holy requisitions of God were at war with all their corrupt feelings. Hence awoke a strong desire to cast off such hated restraints, and to conform to the manners of the heathen. But then those curses of the law! Could they endure to encounter them? Here the heart would waver. And no alternative would be left, but either to avoid the crimes on which the curses were denounced, or by unbelief to escape the fear of the curses themselves. They chose the latter. This operation of an evil heart is most graphically described: "Lest there should be among you man or woman, family or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood, and it come to pass when.

Digitized by Google

he hear the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart to add drunkenness to thirst." That is, though I practise the abominations of idol-worship, of which one is specified as an example of all.

This cause operated at various times, and called down partial punishments. But just before the Babylonish captivity, it pervaded and ruined the whole nation.

Another cause of unbelief was the influence of false prophets. When many in the nation were corrupted, and had formed a strong party of infidels, false prophets arose to confront the true, and to turn against them the tide of popular odium for their fidelity in declaring the impending judgments of God. There were among these false prophets many who were deemed men of high attainments. The ranks of infidelity often enrolled those who, in a worldly point of view, were the most conspicuous men in the nation. They claimed a superior knowledge of the Bible, also great discoveries, and progress: "We are wise; the law of the Lord is with us." They stigmatized the advocates of punishment as bigots. They derided Jeremiah's prophecies by a scoffing play on the word "burden." They tried to destroy his character and influence by slander. Because he took God's side against a guilty people, they assailed him as a traitor. The power of false prophets, sustained by such a party, was immense. And as the time of the ruin of the nation drew near, the situation of the true prophets of God was hazardous and trying in the extreme. Their feelings seem at times to have been excruciated, as they saw that the influence of those false prophets emboldened the infatuated nation in unbelief; and rendered abortive all efforts to convince them that a storm of unmingled wrath was impending; and, if they persisted in their mad career, would soon burst upon their devoted heads.

Jeremiah says: "I am in derision daily; every one mocketh me; for since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me, and a derision daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in my heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. For I heard the defaming of many; fear on every side. Report, say they, and we will report it. All

Digitized by Google

my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him."

We can hardly conceive of the power of the false prophets among such a people; or of the strength of that tide of calumny and abuse which the true prophets of God were called to encounter. The book of Jeremiah is full of illustrations of this part of the subject. At one time he exclaims: "Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake." At another: "Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me." Concerning these false prophets, God says: "They say still unto them that despise me, The Lord hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh in the imagination of his heart, No evil shall come upon you."

Thus did those false prophets concentrate and embody the unbelief of the nation; and in the name of God authorize the people to trample on his laws, and yet hope for impunity. Thus did they turn the torrent of popular odium upon all who endeavored to arouse the people to a sense of their guilt and danger, and to urge them by timely repentance to escape the wrath of God.

We proceed to notice the consequences of this unbelief. These are too well known to need a long description. They are on record as matters of historical fact. As restraints were removed, the degeneracy of the nation became excessive. Idolatry and its attendant vices became more and more prevalent. And the Jewish nation not only equalled, but as God himself testified, exceeded the heathen in their abominations. All efforts to produce a reformation of morals proved ineffectual, and God began to execute his fierce vengeance. At first he sent famine and other judgments, but in vain. Then he smote and destroyed ten tribes. But the remnant continued incorrigible, and became more and more corrupt; until his fiercest wrath arose, and there was no remedy. God himself says: "All the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem; and the Lord God of their fathers sent to

Digitized by Google

them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling-place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand." He fully executed upon them all the curses written in the law of Moses, according to the confession of Daniel in behalf of the people when in captivity: "All Israel have transgressed thy law; — therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God. — And he hath confirmed his words which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil; for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us."

Then had the nations occasion to say, as Moses foretold: "Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?" And then, also, was there occasion to reply in the words of the same prophet: "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt; for they went and served other gods, and worshipped them. — And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book; and the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day." Thus God, as a temporal ruler, executed all his threatenings, and every transgression and disobedience received a just retribution.

Thus we see that the human heart is adequate to any amount of unbelief. We see, too, that the cause of the increase of modern infidelity, as it regards future punishment, lies not in the obscurity of the revelation. A hatred of the holy requisitions and restraints of the gospel, and a desire to lead a worldly or an immoral life unmolested, are sufficient causes. No other is needed. The pride of intellect, and love of the indulgences of fashionable life, foster infidelity in one class; the love of gain in

Digitized by Google

another, and the love of vicious and sensual indulgence in another. Thus an infidel party is formed in the heart of the community. And to organize and embody it, public teachers, claiming the name of ministers of Christ, are raised up; and the tide of obloquy is made to set against those who exhibit with unabated rigor the penalty of the law of God.

We need not suppose that the inspired record is obscure, in order to account for the infidelity of the age. To an honest reader, God's denunciations of the wrath to come seem plain, and they are plain. They need not be misunderstood. We need no solution but the depravity of the human heart. If the threatenings of the law of Moses were not proof against this, need we wonder that those which relate to a future state are not? If temporal, tangible, sensible judgments, denounced in language that could not be misunderstood, were regarded with incredulity, can we think it strange that the judgments relative to a future unseen state are thus treated also? In each case, the principle, and its operation are the same. In one case, it sets at naught the threatenings of temporal, in the other, of eternal, vengeance.

The guilt and folly of such infidelity will appear in eternity, as the guilt and folly of the infidelity of the Jews now appears. We have seen the results of that. It is an exhibition of the effects of infidelity on a smaller scale. It brought temporal ruin on a nation. Soon its effects will be exhibited on the scale of eternity. It will bring eternal ruin on millions of immortal souls. And when its votaries are involved in eternal woe, how guilty, how inexcusable, will their unbelief appear. How guilty those who, like the false prophets of old, employed all their influence to foster and promote it. Temporal calamities may be dreadful. The ruin of a nation is cause of lamentation. What, then, should be said of the eternal ruin of millions of immortal beings?

But efforts are now making to poison the minds of the whole community, and to release the nation from the fear of the wrath of God. As these efforts will seem in eternity, so are they now. Their authors are roots that bear gall and wormwood. They are enemies of God and of the human race. Let all who are yet exposed to endless punishment avoid unbelief as the certain cause of ruin. God is in earnest. They are exposed to endless woe. And if they disbelieve, his wrath will smoke against them. There is but one way of escape; repentance and faith in Christ.

Digitized by Google

GOG AND MAGOG.

The Rabbi Carillon has recently delivered, in the Reformed Synagogue in Spanishtown, Jamaica, a discourse wherein he applies the term Gog and Magog to Russia and the Autocrat. A Jew of the nineteenth century, explaining the prophecies of Isaiah or Ezekiel, awakens many interesting thoughts. But we must lament to see the power of his unbelief, which denies the claims of Jesus of Nazareth and the New Testament, and which must disqualify him for interpreting the prophecies that embrace in their field of vision, the present dispensation. Our readers may be interested in the display of learning and ingenuity here made by the Rabbi. We do not endorse for the soundness of his views.

He says: "It cannot be questioned that the prophecy of Ezekiel is against the last enemies of the Jews. But the present state of public sentiment, as well as the constitutions of all the other European powers, forbid the belief that they will ever again persecute the Jews. Gog-Magog is represented to us as a man whose ambition aims at the conquest of the entire world. Russia alone, of all the nations of the earth, has the disposition to attempt this, or the means of undertaking it with any prospect of success. And it is remarkable that a prophecy is quite current in Russia, the origin of which is unknown, assigning to that empire the ultimate dominion of the earth." This prophecy is probably in part, both the cause and the effect of an ambitious desire, which betrays itself in all the political and military movements of that huge empire.

"In the tenth chapter of Genesis," says this Rabbi, "we find the sons of Japhet to be Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meschech and Tiras; and the sons of Gomer are Ashkenaz, Riphath and Togarmah. From them come the Japhetic nations: namely, the Chinese, the Tartars, the Greeks, the Persians, the Northern Germans, the Muscovites, and the other Sclavonic tribes; and these very nations Ezekiel mentions as being incorporated with the empire of Gog, or tributary to it. In chapter xxxviii., he says: 'Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, (*chief prince*, in the English version,) Meshech and Tubal.' The general name of the country, employed by the Scriptures, is Magog, and that of its princes,

Digitized by Google

Gog; but the country itself is divided into three principalities: Rosh, Meschech and Tubal. The prophet afterward declares, that this prince shall bring a mighty army composed of different nations, whose names are the same as those mentioned in Genesis as the descendents of Japhet and Gomer; and the greater part of these nations, the subjects or allies of the prince of *Rosh*, *Meschech* and *Tubal*, are described as coming *from the north.*" The name of Rosh our Hebraists will recognize as that which the English version renders "prince." The Rabbi, however, is sustained by the Septuagint, De Wette, and Rosenmüller, in making it a proper name. This name is not found among the sons of Japhet. But we know, says the Rabbi, "that the first Czar of great Muscovy was called *Rush*, and that from him the empire takes its present name. We know, too, that in the early times, Russia was divided into three independent states; Russia proper; or, according to some authors, European Muscovy; Muscovy proper, or Eastern and Southern Russia; and Tobolsk, or Northern Russia. These three states were finally reunited under the general name of Russia, and they enslaved many of the Tartar and Sclavonic tribes. Even Persia may be regarded as a dependent on Russia. Now the emperor of these three states, united, Rushy, Moschovy, and Tobolshky, (for that is the true pronunciation,) and of the tributary or dependent countries, is called in Scripture, Gog; and his empire Magog. It is very probable that this name has been given to the state, because the population is chiefly descended from Magog, and Gog seems to be an abbreviation of Magog, applied to the chiefs of that empire.

"The Scriptures also mention specifically the names of the three states of which this empire is composed. 'Son of man, set thy face toward Gog, of the country of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.' Rosh is *Russia*, Meshech, *Muscovy*, and Tubal, *Tobolsk*. Another striking circumstance is, that no other country but Russia is composed of so many different nations. It is also said that these different nations, who are to march under the Russian standard, will be armed with ancient armor, shields, bows, arrows, javelins, and lances. Now, we know that, notwithstanding the immense extent of the Russian empire, it can bring into the field only five hundred thousand or six hundred thousand men who have been trained to the use of modern arms; and that the greater part of its troops still use the hand-missiles of ancient

Digitized by Google

warfare. Thus, in this light also, the prophecy may be applied to Russia. It is also predicted, that the innumerable army of Gog shall be rent by intestine divisions. This prophecy is eminently applicable to Russia, for it is almost certain that Russia, once plunged into a universal war, will see Poland and other oppressed people, spring up at the first reverse of her fortune, to cast off her galling yoke."

"It is thus almost proved that Russia is the land of Magog, and that Nicholas, or one of his successors, is the Gog announced by the prophet, and that there is ground for presuming that the last days are not far distant. We should therefore be on our guard, and pray fervently, not to be overtaken by these events as by a thief in the night."

We cannot fully endorse the Rabbi's interpretations and applications of the prophecy in question. But we think there is in his remarks something worthy of notice. With all their errors and obstinacy, we cannot look with indifference upon this people, whose early history is the history of the Bible; and whose present and coming history is enclosed in its prophetic pages. We sympathize with their earnest watching of the signs of the times for the coming of Judah's king. But we grieve at their unbelief and worldliness which still give a temporal, national, and earthly cast to all expectations and prayers. Nor can we look with any complacency upon that zeal for Judah, which fosters in him these expectations of an earthly Messiah, and an earthly conquest. The whole Millennarian interpretation, and much of the Christian zeal for the Jews, tends to divert their minds from that work of the Spirit which is the gracious coming of Messiah. Political convulsions, and all social changes are preparatory, we admit, to the predicted reign of Messiah. And a part of the plan may be the return of enough of the Jews to Palestine to make the literal fulfilment of prophecy strike the eye of infidelity itself. But Judah and the Gentile church must know that the Holy Spirit is to represent to the church her invisible Head, until this world shall close its history; that until that time, they are "blessed who have not seen, and yet have believed;" that "they which are of faith, the same are Abraham's children," and so, heirs of all the promises. If his lineal descendants have a promise of restoration to Mount Zion, so have his spiritual descendants. If they are to have David on the throne, so are we. If they are to have

Digitized by Google

a glorious temple of immense dimensions, and sacrifices are to smoke on its altars, we shall share it with our Christian-Jewish brethren. If Gog and Magog are to make war on the Lord's people, it will not be as Jews that they will be attacked. To us it seems preposterous. When is Israel to become a nation, settled, distinct, powerfully organized with its army, navy, fortresses, and wealth, the nerve of war? In what country will the scattered tribes be settled, and become to Russian ambition so formidable an obstacle as to concentrate the wrath of that empire upon themselves? Will it be in Palestine? That is not in the highway of the great Autocrat's favorite march to Constantinople or to Persia; to Mosul or to Calcutta. Our literalist brethren ask for a reasonable interpretation of the prophecies concerning Israel, yet unfulfilled. We ask the same. And we would ask, if they really believe that the Jews are again to become a warlike nation in Syria? and if the conquests which animated the hearts of Ezekiel and John, when they predicted the destruction of Gog and Magog, were repetitions of those horrid scenes of carnage which have so long made heaven weep for man? We see something more consonant to the catholic and spiritual character of the New Testament, in all these assurances to the holy men of every generation who wait for the salvation of God.

FREEDOM OF SPEAKING AND PRINTING.

THE grave and liberal-minded John Locke penned this sentence: "Those have no right to be tolerated by the magistrates, who will not own and teach the right of tolerating all men in matters of mere religion." But there has been progress in theory and practice upon this subject since the days of Locke. We would say to every Jesuit and Romish Cardinal in Christendom, — Intolerable as is your intolerance, it shall not exclude you from toleration. Let the existing naturalization laws be modified, if they require it. Yet we say also, and in no spirit of bravado, let Catholic emigrants come if they please by millions, and with them, the wealth and learning of the hierarchy in such proportions as we have not yet seen; still we will not in the least modify our

Digitized by Google

avowed principles of religious freedom. We will write, print, and if need be, fight, in securing to the Romanist the free and lawful exercise of his religion, but he shall understand that protestant freedom of press and speech is no less dear to us.

It may be thought that the tyranny over men's eyes, as well their judgment, which has so long been practised in many parts of the old world, must of course be neutralized in our land; and that no probable increase of Romish influence can have any other effect than to render the protestant press more manly and bold. But there appears to us to be an excessive confidence in this respect. Freedom of the press and editorial independence are two things. The truth is, that to a sad extent the secular press of the land is silenced, either by party or private interest. Some time since, a gentleman visited a large number of political editors in the United States, for the purpose of persuading them to publish well authenticated extracts from history, shewing the influence of Romanism on government, together with temperate original articles on the subject. He stated that only about twenty, out of two hundred, would consent to do anything of the kind.

At the West, attempts have been made to muzzle the pulpit, as well as the press. The local influence of slavery, in trammelling the pen and the tongue, has been yet more decided. But neither the ejectment of free presses, nor Congressional violence, has arrested the discussion of this difficult and delicate subject. Wise counsels and right principles are prevailing more and more extensively; and if, in the continued struggles, God save the North from infatuation, he will doubtless save the South from destruction.

The removal of censorship to such an extent from the European press within a year past, has awakened the liveliest interest in this country; while editorial licentiousness, particularly in France, suggests the inquiry, What is true freedom of speech and the press? It is the privilege of uttering with the tongue, or in print, whatever a person pleases, provided it be not criminal. It is the absence of all direct restrictions; — every one having the option of saying what he will, with the understanding that he is amenable to justice for his acts in this respect, as well as in every other. It is freedom from all previous legal constraint, not from a penalty in case of abuse.

In order that this liberty may be enjoyed in its legitimate fulness, without degenerating into licentiousness, it is necessary

Digitized by Google

that all regulating enactments be particularly explicit, and be promptly executed. And that such enactments should exist, is as plain as that the public good ought to be secured by legislative regulations, bearing in any respect upon the conduct of citizens. The law must shield a man's good name, as well as his life and limb. Malicious defamation is a public wrong, and the public peace, as well as private comfort, being involved in every instance of libel, the pen of the libeller ought to be restrained as well as the hand of the assassin. The stability of government must also, within certain limits, be defended from the wanton attacks of its enemies. Hence seditious and treasonable matter ought to call down a penalty upon its authors and venders. Language that is grossly impious merits the restraint of a specific enactment. So that to provide a penalty for him who publishes libellous, seditious, or blasphemous matter, is no infringement upon a proper freedom of speech and of the press. No man is free or safe, where another may commit such wrongs with impunity.

The liberty in question is based upon that liberty of conscience and opinion which is the inalienable right of every one. There is a sanctuary where human laws are suspended. Sentiments and feelings come within the province of no legislation but the Supreme. He alone who made the soul, may prescribe authoritatively for its exercises, and to him alone is it responsible for them. Coercion, therefore, bodily pains and penalties, resorted to as a punishment for mere opinions, or in order to effect a change of opinions, transcend the province of man. It is trenching upon the prerogative of the Almighty. When the intent of the heart manifests itself in *an overt act*, — an act which violates a principle of justice embodied in a law of the commonwealth, then, and then only, should the executive arm shew itself. A man may justly be made to labor under some disabilities on account of his opinions; but his freedom to entertain the disabling opinion, is not thereby impaired. Even this negative kind of penalty, however, is allowable only where the higher class of rights and the more sacred privileges are endangered. An oath is justly withheld from the atheist, because if administered, it would be a mockery. But it is his own choice to disqualify himself for giving evidence in the usual form, before a court of justice. Yet, notwithstanding his scepticism, he is entitled as fully as any man to all civil privileges and immunities, which are

Digitized by Google

not dependent upon his personal oath. It was well in the Athenians to burn the writings of the atheistic Protagoras, because they had previously prohibited blasphemy; but in banishing Protagoras himself, they probably exceeded the bounds which an enlightened reason would draw. Had the majority been atheists, they might with equal propriety have ostracized the rest for their stupid idolatry. Far more tolerant, however, were the Athenians than the French of Toulouse, who condemned and executed Vanini, for his atheism. If it were clear that the Romanist's allegiance to the Pope is of such a nature, as to invalidate his oath of allegiance to a protestant civil power, then Catholic emancipation in England was a false step; and the constitution of North Carolina, which debars from offices of trust and profit all who reject the protestant religion, is so far what the constitution of every state in the Union ought to be. If however, the Romanist can honestly take the freeman's oath, or the oath of naturalization, then England in the case referred to, did right, and for her dissenting subjects must do yet more; while our sister commonwealth ought to revise her constitution. Needless test acts are odious; and such acts are needless, if not evidently called for by the safety of the state. The incumbrance of an ecclesiastical establishment, which must be upheld by the civil arm, is a poor apology for making religious dissent a civil offence. To think as he will in religion, politics, and the sciences, is the prerogative of every man on the globe, for aught that any other created being in the universe may say. God, speaking directly, or by the mouth of his ambassadors, does indeed enjoin right faith and feeling, as much as outward propriety; and he enforces his requisitions by promises and threatenings. But that is what man may not do. Human law pauses at the exterior man, and ceases at the grave; the divine law takes cognizance of the inner man, and its force will be unabated when the heavens and earth are passed away. Marsyas dreamed that he had cut Dionysius's throat, and Dionysius put him to death; affirming that he would never have dreamed thus, if he had not contemplated the deed when awake. This, in a man, was the height of human injustice; but in the eye of the omniscient King, whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer. The limits of the two provinces are sufficiently distinct; and for man to invade the divine prerogative, is disastrous arrogance.

Digitized by Google

Freedom of conscience and of opinion, so far as human constraint is concerned, ought evidently to be the privilege of all. It is not an item of political expediency; it is the birthright of every human being. All persecution therefore, for opinion's sake, and all attempts at compulsory proselytism, whether Mohammedan or Christian, are deeply repugnant to an enlightened mind. Freedom of speech and of the press follow from this, without denial; for as no man may dictate to another what he is to think, so neither what he shall say, or shall not say, — the limitations relating to religion, morals, and politics being understood.

It is not maintained that under such liberty there are no incident evils; but it is contended that they are abundantly overbalanced by benefits, while censorship never has obviated the mischiefs of an unshackled press. But admitting such supervision to be allowable, where shall the qualified censor be found? Where has he ever been found? What man, what body of men, is removed so far from prejudice and ignorance as to be entitled to judge for the rest of the world? Is it not preposterous to make a magistrate the umpire of truth? Is criticism a duty of civil government? The freedom of which we speak is evidently indispensable to the higher forms of manliness in character and in thinking, — indispensable to stimulate the general mind to desirable activity, and secure the completest diffusion of intelligence. The freer a community is in this respect, the less need of solicitude is there on the part of magistrates, for what may be said in or out of its own limits. The prince who is nervously anxious as to what may be said of him, and who strives to suppress every thing but commendation, is a pitiable slave to his fears. And the system of previous licensing operates with great detriment upon the independence of those who write, and remotely of those who read. Freedom is the element of activity and enterprise; but if a man may not be trusted with his own thoughts, if all he produces must be to order, what likelihood is there of valuable discoveries, or or of any general elevation of character?

Of indolent formalists, who love prescription and a lifeless uniformity, Milton speaks thus: "Another sort there be, who, when they hear that all things shall be ordered, all things regulated and settled; nothing written but what passes through the custom-house of certain publicans that have the tonnaging and poundaging of all free-spoken truth; will straight give up them-

Digitized by Google

selves into your hands, — make them and cut them out what religion ye please. What need they torture their heads with that which others have taken so strictly, and so unalterably into their own purveying? These are the fruits which a dull ease, and cessation of our knowledge, will bring forth among the people. How goodly, and how to be wished, were such an obedient unanimity as this! What a fine conformity would it starch us all into! Doubtless a stanch and solid piece of frame-work as any January could freeze together." It is a lazy method of guarding truth and the public peace, to suppress error instead of confuting it, and to muzzle the discontented, instead of convincing them. Constrained virtue is no virtue; and legislating for the tongue and the pen will convert commonwealths into monasteries and nunneries, whose chief excellences are in their walls and their wards. Why did not God set cherubim to keep Satan out of Paradise originally, rather than wait till after the apostacy? The divine method is, to try character. The finest specimens of human excellence are witnessed when loyalty and truth are apparently most endangered. But for Pelagius, we might have had no Augustine; but for the modern deists, we should be without those incomparable apologies for our holy religion, of which they had been the occasion. Every thing valuable will bear investigation; why, then, should the constitution or the creed, the State or the church, shrink from the severest scrutiny? If reform is needed, and is practicable, let it be shewn. Let every thing lie open for discussion in its proper place, and liberty, truth, and righteousness will gain by it. If power were lodged only in the hands of the wise and good, the result, though not the principle in the case, would be far otherwise than it actually is. But the lovers of rational liberty, and pure Christianity, have so seldom hitherto had an unrestricted opportunity of doing battle for their principles, that from policy, as well as a sense of right, they must advocate full freedom to preach and print.

Over and above what the patriot and the devotee of science may feel, the Christian has eminent reason to maintain this right. His Lord and Master has given him a commission, which, for its full discharge, requires just such liberty as we now advocate. It was in the discharge of duties thus imposed, that Peter and John, when prohibited to preach, replied: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God,

Digitized by Google

judge ye." The council which thus attempted to silence the apostles, was the Sanhedrim, — an ancient court of the Star-Chamber, the Jewish Vatican, — one of the many bodies in which civil and ecclesiastical intolerance has found its peculiar home. Shortly after, the apostles were again imprisoned; and after their miraculous release, the council, when they had beaten them, commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Still, daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ. That instrumentality still is, and will ever be, the leading one in the conversion and edification of souls. As, therefore, every friend of Christ prays and strives for the progress of his kingdom, so must he long and labor that no impediment upon the lips or the press may hinder the free course of the Gospel universally.

In a civil point of view, there is to us, living under a representative government, a particular reason why we should prize the liberty now discussed. It is a great balancing power. Its value is beyond all expression, as an auxiliary and safeguard to other departments of liberty. It is of more importance even than the free discussion in legislative bodies, and hence has the execrations of every fugitive Metternich and every reigning Nicholas. But this daughter of heaven has nothing to fear ultimately from Orion with his club, or from the Ursa-Major of the Northern hemisphere. It is natural that tyranny, civil and ecclesiastical, should frown upon the freedom we now advocate, and for which our fathers suffered the loss of all things. The two cannot coëxist, for the moment despotism can be discussed with impunity, it has ceased to be such; and evidently a better day is at hand. Of all the hopeful signs of the present time for Europe, no one is brighter to our eye than the emancipation of sentiment now in progress. We hail it as a strange, yet auspicious, development, that in Italy itself, Enrico Montazio, in his recent correspondence with the Archbishop of Tuscany, should use language like this, without as yet suffering imprisonment or assassination: "You are free, my lord, if you will, to calumniate, to persecute me, to threaten my liberty, perhaps even to plot against my life. I am free, however, to sustain myself in the presence of every peril, every threat, every outrage, by my faith and my principles; and to invoke now and forever, the recognition of the most sacred rights of man, — liberty of speech and liberty of conscience."

Digitized by Google

THOUGHTS ON READING.

THE object of the present remarks is not to moralize on reading, but to suggest some things which may be useful to those who would read judiciously and with discrimination.

Reading is a duty which it is easy for those to neglect who are pressed by numerous cares. It cannot, however, be long neglected without injury. That ennui of which many complain, is perhaps, owing to their not having interested themselves in some valuable book. In hunger, the gastric juice preys on the coats of the stomach; and an empty mind is affected by a similar pain. Many morbid feelings are owing to a neglect of reading, because when the mind is not occupied with useful subjects of thought, the passions are more easily irritated. There is a self-respect produced by the consciousness of having read, or of being employed in reading, a truly valuable book, which in a measure keeps a man from venting his spleen on others. A reader of useful books is seldom spleeny.

While we are in the preparatory period of a profession, we ought to read certain books merely for the sake of being acquainted with them, and of being able to say that we have read them; for there are books of which it may be said, as of speaking and writing good grammar, there is not so much merit in knowing them, as demerit in being ignorant of them. There would be a difference of opinion what books should be assigned to this class; but probably all will agree that on finding a professional man, in middle life, reading Rollin's Ancient History, or Josephus, for the first time, we should wonder as much that he had not read them before, as though we should find him employed with an arithmetic, learning Discount or Partial Payments. In all our colleges and theological seminaries some instructor should have it in charge to advise young men with regard to their reading; and to see that they be acquainted with certain books which are somewhat like the ordinary but useful stones that compose the cellar-walls of a house, — never to be prominent among the visible proofs of their education, but serving a good purpose out of sight.

After we have entered on the active duties of our profession, our usefulness will depend very much on our reading. Intelligent men judge from our efforts, whether we are readers and students.

Digitized by Google

Allusions of which we, perhaps, are unconscious, shades of thought imparted by a knowledge of things out of our profession, veins of truth which lie below the surface of a subject, and expressions, or larger quotations, borrowed from valuable thinkers, impart to a preacher a certain power which commands respect. It was one direction of Paul to a young minister, to give attendance to reading, that his profiting might appear unto all.

Reading has the effect to fertilize the mind. When writing on any subject, however diverse from that on which we may have been reading, it is surprising to see how surely some connection will be formed between them as we write. That "common bond," which Cicero beautifully describes as holding all the sciences together, imparts its spell to all subjects of thought, so that they help each other with illustrations. This supply of illustration is one of the happy benefits of reading. To take, for example, a book which happens to be at hand, let a man read Fremont's work on Oregon and North California; and when he next writes a sermon, or, perhaps, several years afterward, some scene, or some fact, or some expression in that book will furnish him with an illustration. As when we turn a faucet, the water in a hundred pipes begins to move towards it; so whenever we write, every thing which we have recently read, and some things which we read long ago, feel a sort of attraction, and are ready to pour themselves, if needed, into the subject in hand.

One great benefit of reading is in enriching our vocabulary. Milton's prose is an illustration of a great command of powerful words. A striking word is a picture. Shakspeare is king in this dominion. To condense a thought by setting it forth in one apt word, to give an epithet which will paint the quality of the thing which we wish to describe, is one secret of powerful writing. Gray's Poems occur, just at this moment, as a good illustration of the power of happy epithets. For example, in his Prospect of Eton College, he speaks of fallen ambition,

> "To bitter scorn a sacrifice,
> And *grinning* infamy."

Such an epithet in that connection is as good as a whole page of description. Men who are studious of right epithets, and know how to use them skilfully, are not wordy. They who heap odd

Digitized by Google

adjectives together for effect, as some do who know the power of striking epithets, lose the fruit of their labor, because their artifice is seen, and they also distract and weary attention. But it is tedious to listen to a discourse in which no unusual and striking word, either noun, or especially, adjective, comes out with bold, original force; but the dull monotony of common-place flows down like the noise of a rain-spout, which lulls to sleep. He who reads much and with care, will insensibly enlarge his command of words. Here it may be observed, that one of the most profitable books in this respect for one to read whose business is to write, is Dr. Johnson's larger Dictionary, containing his quotations from English authors illustrating his words. Several pages of that book read at a time will have a good effect in stimulating the mind in the use of language. There are those who have read that dictionary through in course.

Some have complained that they cannot read much, because everything they read stimulates their imagination, excites trains of thought, and leads them off into collateral reflections; so that they can read but a little at a time, and are discouraged in not being able to master a greater number of books.

Such readers are on some accounts to be envied. They convert everything which they acquire into immediate use. They have prolific minds, like prairie soil, which the slightest tillage excites to superabundant bearing. Let them not be discouraged at their slow progress among "the latest publications." They get more intellectual profit from one hour's reading, than others do from the reading of all the publications of the season. Though they may not read so often as others, they have the same advantages of natural constitution with camels, whose drink serves them for many days. Dugald Stewart says, "a want of curiosity and of invention facilitates greatly the acquisition of knowledge. It renders the mind passive in receiving the ideas of others, and saves all the time which might be employed in examining their foundation or in tracing their consequences. They who are possessed of much acuteness or originality, enter with difficulty into the views of others, not from any defect in their power of apprehension, but because they cannot adopt opinions which they have not examined, and because their attention is often seduced by their own speculations." *

* Elements, &c. VI. 8.

Digitized by Google

For this cause, the readers of whom we speak, after reading a little, are so excited by some illustration, or new thought, or they follow out their own reflections suggested by the reading so earnestly, that they make slow progress through a book. But they are profitable readers, and we are sure to see the fruit of their reading in their productions. Such readers ought to make themselves acquainted with the purport of every valuable book which is published; for they are the men who know readily where to find a thing when it is wanted, for illustration or instruction; provided they have at least cast their eyes over the pages of books as they issue from the press. It is peculiarly incumbent on such readers, as indeed it is the duty of all, for their intellectual good, to employ themselves from time to time on some books or subjects which will require close, continuous thinking. Otherwise, their writings will be desultory, and tediously replete with mere facts and illustrations.

The publication of a book, evidently written for instruction, is certainly an important event; and every thinking man will so regard it, and keep his eye on the issues of the press. For when a book is published, it appears that some mind has been employed upon a subject which has deeply interested it. The author has gone through the important process of deliberating and deciding, whether to speak to the world on that subject or not. He has had that fearful experience of breaking his mind to a publisher; an experience which he who has known will not hastily repeat. Under all the difficulties of the case, the book comes forth. That man has taken the tribune, and the world is his assembly. Very few may listen to him, but still his book is an event; and there are those in every intelligent community who are influenced by it, if it be a useful book; if not, its publication serves the purpose of deterring more able men from attempting that in which they might fail. To keep the eye on the issues of the press is to keep one's self informed of the progress of the age; and happy are they who have the means and disposition to do it.

There is one class of publications which we may read with profit, and which we may naturally suppose will always deserve attention, namely: orations, and addresses on important occasions. These are the best efforts of their authors. Every thing combines to make them exert themselves to the utmost of their ability, and we lose much in not making more account of such publications.

Digitized by Google

But after all, in reading, we sow much, and bring in little. It requires resolution and industry to maintain good habits in this particular. It is a source of great satisfaction and pleasure to think, that our knowledge in a future state will no doubt be gained more by intuition, and not by the wearying process of study, with dull apprehensions, imperfect memories, and poor eye-sight. Reason, which distinguishes us from brutes, is, in its laborious and painful exercise, a mark of our inferiority to higher beings whose processes of deduction are more rapid; or at least, with whom such processes are pleasurable influxes of light to their understandings and hearts. A Christian scholar may derive much happiness from the thought that the pleasures of learning are to increase with him forever. But in conversing with educated and cultivated men who are in an unregenerated state, we are impressed with this great difference in them and their prospects, from those of Christians, — that their endowments may be confined to this world. Unless they be converted, their accomplishments here are only qualifying them for more extensive and more exquisite pain hereafter. Every book they read, every science they acquire, every new language, every new train of thought, will only minister to their sorrow.

CORRESPONDENCE ON MISSIONS.

Several months ago, an aged lady of talent and wealth, connected with the upper class of society in one of our cities, and in religious sentiments a Unitarian, was moved to write and publish some "Tracts on Missions," whose object was to shew the inexpediency and the unscriptural nature of missions to the heathen. The spirit of the "Tracts" may be inferred from this, that the title-page bore as a motto the following passage of Scripture: "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." Matt. xxiii. 15.

The authoress was pleased to send a copy of these "Tracts," together with a letter, to one of the evangelical pastors of the place where she lived. He replied in a letter. This correspondence

Digitized by Google

having come to our knowledge, and having deeply interested us in reading it, we here present it to our readers, omitting merely the names and local allusions. EDS. OBS.

* * * * *, Sept. 19, 1848.

RESPECTED SIR,

Some time has passed since I published "Tracts on Missions," intended to prove the importance of directing all our efforts to reform and save that portion of our fellow beings who are sunk in vice and misery, and who are daily increasing in consequence of their alluring into their ranks the young and thoughtless.

It is not only for this purpose that I have made this effort, but in the hope of saving from their impending fate that interesting portion of our race which inhabits the Sandwich Islands. Was not the command first given to go to our own lost sheep, previous to that of preaching the gospel to the world; and was not this last command followed by an exhortation to the performance of those duties of humanity which were required in attestation of the truth of their mission? This object has an important bearing on the welfare of our country at large.

When I published "Tracts on Missions," I felt that as age was rapidly advancing upon me, nothing more could be done than to circulate freely what I had already written; nevertheless, as time has since been allowed me, I have determined to reprint my "Remarks on the Tour around Hawaii," as the predictions then made have been so fully verified.

In reference to the statements made, all who are acquainted with the History of Missions must be convinced of the truth of what I have advanced; many of the events described have passed and are still passing before our eyes.

Were not Missions sent among our Indians to convert them to our faith, from the first settlement of our country? And how has this process been carried on? How have the tidings of peace and good-will been perverted, and its most sacred precepts violated? And, in conclusion, have not the confiding natives been driven from all they held most dear and sacred to become exiles in a foreign land? Moreover by the establishment of missions, have not the generous natives of the beautiful isles in the Pacific Ocean been deprived of their ancient inheritance;

Digitized by Google

and by devices which they had no power to withstand, are daily wasting away, and giving place to their missionary teachers? When the Sandwich Islands were first discovered by Cook, he estimated the population at four hundred thousand; by the last estimate made, they had depopulated to ninety thousand.

From my remarks on the intolerance and bigotry which have prevailed in all missionary enterprises, it may appear to some as indicating a bitterness of spirit toward those who profess the faith of Calvin; I wish to assure you and others that I have confidence in the sincerity and purity of very many of its adherents.

You will, I trust, accept the remarks, respectfully offered

From your friend.

REPLY.

*****, Sept. 21, 1848.

DEAR MADAM:

I received your new pamphlet, with your note, on the evening of the 19th inst. I had heard from time to time, that you retained your faculties in a remarkable degree, for one so far advanced in life. And I should have been most happy also to have heard, that, as the shadows of the night of death were deepening so fast around you, a sense of your moral infirmities, and a truly enlightened persuasion of the necessity of some other righteousness than that of our fallen nature, even in its most cultivated and refined development, had produced a more evident amelioration of that "bitterness of spirit towards those who profess the faith of Calvin," which, you are perfectly right in suspecting, may "appear to some, as indicated" by your "Remarks."

God has given you talents. If they had been

"baptized
In the pure fountain of eternal love,"

you might have been qualified to serve the cause of salvation as did the godly and humble, yet brilliant and most accomplished, Hannah More. But how different the sentiments, the spirit, and the influence of *her* genius and heart, her life and her pen! I forbear to pursue the contrast.

Digitized by Google

You are pleased to "assure me and others" that "you have confidence in the sincerity and purity of very many of the adherents of the faith of Calvin;" although in your "Preface," you have told us, that "no superstition or mode of faith can compare with that of Calvinism" in all that is "shocking or appalling" by the "perversion of the attributes of the great parent of the universe." And you would have us believe that it is "*Calvinism*," which has caused the frightful decrease in the population of the Sandwich Islands! My own reading, many years since, had taught me a very different explanation of that indisputable decrease. And even if "*Calvinism*" be identical with the abominable licentiousness of Captain Cook and other voyagers, or of residents at those Islands, I am quite at a loss to perceive the accountableness of the *American Missionaries* for a "pestilence walking in darkness," and a retribution of vice and crime, which had swept away so many tens of thousands, before a single one of those slandered missionaries had set his foot upon those Islands.

Are you sure that you know whereof you affirm, when you speak of "the faith of Calvin"? If in so short a time as since 1820, "Calvinism" has wrought such horrible mischief in the "beautiful" Islands, why did it not utterly ruin "the goodly heritage," which our fathers bequeathed to us? I have been accustomed to consider New England, "the glory of all lands." And I have always understood, that, from the beginning hitherto, "the faith of Calvin" has had the predominant sway over the principles and practice of the religious portion of the community. Hence, among numerous other auspicious indications for the future, I have thanked God most fervently, that, during the last twenty-five years, there have been organized in Massachusetts alone, TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE NEW CALVINISTIC CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES!

This may not be according to your desire or prayer, however much you may wish us to "direct all our efforts to reform and save that portion of our fellow-beings, who are sunk in vice and misery" here in our own land. I am not, I trust, altogether insensible to the importance of attending to the wants and woes of the guilty and wretched at our own doors, and abroad in our vast country. I am a most zealous advocate of "Home Missions," and of "City Missions." I contribute freely to these,

Digitized by Google

and to the American Tract Society, which is sending such preachers as Baxter, Bunyan, and Doddridge, to "every log-house beyond the mountains;" while the American Home Missionary Society has its own one thousand missionaries. I give my money and my voice, in aid of numerous other societies, which aim directly "to reform and save" "the vicious and miserable;" and to bring to a knowledge of "the truth as in Jesus" the many thousands of our population, who, in the higher classes as well as the lower, as yet give no evidence that they have the "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." The same is true of the members of the Church and Society of which I am the pastor. And the same is true of all others, that I have ever known, who have done the most to spread the Gospel throughout the world.

What we do for Foreign Missions, is but a fraction of what we do for the present and immortal welfare of those who are nearest to us in place; and who, in other respects, have peculiar claims upon us, as the followers of Him, who said to his disciples in his farewell instructions: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and *in the uttermost parts of the earth.*"

Here let me ask, whether, if those disciples had interpreted their Master's will as you have expounded it in your anti-missionary pamphlets, — there would now be any Christianity in any part of the whole world? And further, do you really think, that it would have been better for our Pagan ancestors in Europe, and for the world that now is, if they had never seen those missionaries, by whose self-denying and self-sacrificing instrumentality, they were "turned from their dumb idols," and sanguinary sensualities, to "serve the living God?"

Whatever reasons existed for the command to preach the Gospel to every creature, the same will continue until "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the seas." This, if I remember rightly, was some years since adopted by one of your own religious denomination, as the main argument of his able appeal for foreign missions. I refer to the amiable Dr. Tuckerman, who so zealously labored for the poor in our neighboring city. The argument may be ineffectual with some, and may be ridiculous as a dream of enthusiasm; but it is most Scriptural, evangelical, and unanswerable.

Digitized by Google

It is, as you think, worse than useless to attempt any good for the "beautiful islands," and the idolatrous regions of the earth, — which infidels of the school of Rousseau and Voltaire, formerly described as the garden of Eden before the serpent entered it, and "God drove out the man." In the sober, unvarnished truth of real life, it can be proved by witnesses innumerable, and of unimpeachable veracity, that the character of the *modern* heathen, as well as that of the ancient, has been most faithfully delineated by the inspired apostle, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. One exception only I have ever heard; and that is, that there are some things among the *modern* heathen, which, if they existed at Rome and elsewhere, the Holy Spirit did not suffer to be named, or so much as alluded to, because of their revolting loathsomeness. But, relying upon the aid of Him who has promised to be with his friends to the end of the world, while they labor to make disciples of all nations, we anticipate the ultimate overthrow of all idolatry, superstition, and error, and the glorious triumph of the doctrine of our atoning and almighty Redeemer, in every land upon the face of the earth. The same power that hurled Jupiter and Juno, Mars and Venus, and all the gods and goddesses of classic mythology, from the Olympian summits, is adequate to accomplish the universal evangelization of the apostate millions of our globe. And we expect to be opposed, calumniated, and reviled, as were the primitive believers, with the apostles of our Lord, and as was our Lord himself.

At the late meeting of the American Board of Missions, in Boston, there were present seven hundred and sixteen members, corporate and honorary. Among the five hundred or more clergymen, there were many whose talents and learning, piety and charity, are unsurpassed in the American Union. There were civilians also, laymen from every profession and occupation, — and some of them, to say the least, of the very highest rank in private and in public estimation. On Thursday afternoon, more than two thousand, from all parts of the land, united in a delightful commemoration of the love of Christ, in "dying for our sins according to the Scriptures." With what emotions, do you suppose, any one, whether male or female, of that intelligent and philanthropic assemblage, would read such a pamphlet as your "Remarks on the 'Tour around Hawaii'?" These, and

Digitized by Google

thousands of thousands of others, who are of a kindred faith and spirit, you, dear Madam, think it suitable indirectly to characterize, upon your title-page, as if like that "generation of vipers," "the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites," the "covetous," and the "adulterers," upon whom "wrath came to the uttermost," as upon "children of hell," preëminently and incorrigibly! And what is "the head and front of our offending?" Why, simply this, that because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," we would send the glad tidings of the "Light of life," to all who are "perishing for lack of vision."

Seriously, I cannot see the consistency of any appeal from you that we should engage in any religious enterprize whatever. I should suppose that you would prefer that we should expend our energies, as much as possible abroad, in hope that we should do the less at home, in diffusing, and perpetuating "the faith of Calvin." I can assure you, we are doing a great work in this respect, and we are purposing to do vastly more. But if I believed, as you appear to believe, I should deem it the wiser course, to say in regard to all projects of moral and social reform, in this land or in any other: "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry!"

From the "Abstract of the last Report of the Prudential Committee of the A. B. C. F. M.," — which I send you in anticipation of the Report at length, — you will perceive that we have now in the missionary service, as laborers from this country, only about four hundred; which, with the "native helpers," make but five hundred and fifty-seven in all. If I should live to be as aged as you are, I confidently expect that the number from this land will then be, not four hundred, but four thousand; and not four thousand only, but rather forty thousand.

But before that day, which I pray God may fully come, and yet more abundantly, — you, my dear Madam, will have ceased from your earthly course. You will have passed to that world where every one will receive, according as his work shall be. You will then have known whether you have done your duty, in the use of your acknowledged abilities and your great wealth; and whether you have your part for eternity among those, who "have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood

Digitized by Google

of the Lamb," or with those to whom "Christ crucified" was "foolishness," and who had all "their good things" in their "lifetime."

Yes, my dear Madam, you and I, and all others, in whose welfare we ought ever to have a most lively interest, will, ere long, "stand at the judgment seat of Christ." We shall then "see as we are seen." Then will it appear whether ours is the spirit of her, whose devoted love poured the alabaster-box of precious ointment on the Saviour's head, or that of him who so indignantly said: "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" "This he said," as you may remember, "*not that he cared for the poor.*" And then also will it be seen, whether *they* have been most faithful to their Divine Master, who, like the converted persecutor of the church of God, would publish the blessed name of Jesus to all people under heaven, as the only name whereby we can be saved; or, on the contrary, whether they shall be most acceptable to the Father of lights and of mercies, — who, if they could possibly prevent it, would not suffer one herald of the cross to bear the story of Bethlehem and Gethsemane, of Calvary and Mount Olivet, to any of those "dark places of the earth," which are all "full of the habitations of cruelty."

Have you lately read, dear Madam, what the great Apostle to the Gentiles wrote to the Thessalonian converts, in the second chapter of his first Epistle? Did you ever mark what he considered the very climax of the atrocious guilt of those who "both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and persecuted" him and his brethren in the Lord? — "FORBIDDING US TO SPEAK TO THE GENTILES, THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED, — TO FILL UP THEIR SINS ALWAYS!"

Soon after receiving your pamphlet, I was reading in course the second chapter of another Epistle, the first to the Corinthians. I was much impressed with the "observations" which the spiritually-minded author of the "Force of Truth," has given us in the incomparable "Family Bible;" those volumes, which, you will allow me to say, may well employ a very considerable part of the residue of your days.

"No man truly understands or properly values divine revelation, except that Divine Spirit, 'who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God,' and who revealed them to the apostles, removes the

Digitized by Google

veil from his heart, and enables him to perceive their real excellency. On this great Teacher we must simply depend, while we seek to know 'the things which are freely given by God to his people,' and to obtain the assurance that we belong to that favored company. If indeed we are delivered from 'the spirit of the world,' and are taken under the guidance of 'the Spirit of God,' we shall more and more regard the words of the sacred Scripture; and, 'comparing spiritual things with spiritual,' our holy discernment will increase, and we shall acquire a faculty in speaking on religious subjects, in language in some degree suited to their divine nature and infinite importance. But whoever teaches, or what language soever is employed, 'the natural man will either oppose, despise, or pervert 'the things of the Spirit of God;' he cannot cordially receive or rightly understand them; they will remain foolishness to him, because he is destitute of spiritual discernment. On the other hand, he who is 'born of God,' however destitute of genius or learning, will become *spiritual*, and capable of discerning the harmony and glory of divine truth; he will experience its sanctifying effects in his heart, and produce corresponding fruits in his life. His judgment and conduct will be formed upon the Word of God; and those who presume to judge, condemn, or deride him, for violating the maxims of worldly wisdom, will only shew their own ignorance and arrogance. They cannot instruct him in 'spiritual things,' by carnal reasonings; they have not 'known the mind of the Lord Jesus,' or they would not condemn him for acting according to it; and they can no more argue him out of his principles, experience, hope, or duty, than a man with good eyes could be convinced that there is no light from the sun, or that light is neither pleasant nor profitable, by the ingenious sophisms of a man who has been blind from his birth."

Upon mature reflection, I have thought it due to you, and to myself, dear Madam, thus to notice as I now do, the attentions which you have bestowed upon me and the many worthy friends of my Master, with whom I am so well known to be most intimately associated. I would not do you the injustice of imagining that you had the slightest intention of wounding my feelings. You cannot but be aware, however, that every line of what you have been pleased to send me with your compliments, supported, as you mainly are, by the inuendoes, and calumnies, and egregious blunders of the shallow and unprincipled author of "Typee" and "Omoo," — must, of course, be any thing and every thing but what is congenial and agreeable to my most cherished convictions of truth and duty.

I am,

Dear Madam,

Very respectfully and kindly, yours.

Digitized by Google

THE MONTHLY CONCERT.

A FEW thoughts have occurred to us upon the communication of intelligence at the Monthly Concert. It is worthy of observation, that the progress of physical and statistical geography has, to a considerable extent, been an index to God's designs concerning the extension of Messiah's kingdom. The Jewish economy was an economy of isolation, both local and religious. God chose one from among the many families upon earth, with a view rather to the preservation, than the propagation, of a pure faith. Theirs was a system of authorized form, of national monasticism. Hence, according to the purpose and providence of God, the Jews, in the period of their prosperity, knew but little of other nations, and usually all increase of foreign acquaintance proved a snare and scourge. The commerce of the world was chiefly in the hands of the enterprising, but idolatrous Phœnicians. Tyrian seamen navigated the ships of Solomon. When the last of the prophets laid down his harp, the geographical knowledge of the nation was but little advanced beyond its bounds as they were when Joshua allotted the promised land to the several tribes. They scarcely knew of such a country as Greece, near as it was, or of the Euxine and Caspian Seas. The first map of the world, known to have been constructed, was not by Daniel, but by his contemporary, Anaximander, six hundred years before Christ.

When, however, a new dispensation had been ushered in, when that form of religion which was capable of becoming, and was designed to become, universal, had been introduced, then persecution, and other causes, were permitted to scatter its early propagators far and wide. The disciples went everywhere preaching the Word; and from that time onward, those possessed of the only true knowledge of God, have had a disposition, and have had opportunities, never realized before for acquaintance and travel in the world. God has evidently employed maritime and inland discovery to open the way for the unfolding of his gracious purposes. The mariner and the traveller he has guided, both as to era and direction, with a view to lay open to his people the territories they are to subdue; and missionary efforts, from first to last, have been manifestly aided and stimulated by the results of worldly enterprise. How often has some new

Digitized by Google

geographical disclosure, or an acquaintance with some new fact in the moral condition of a distant people, roused a pious heart, and led to movements of incalculable importance.

More than a century since, a negro from St. Thomas dropped a remark at Copenhagen, concerning the West India Islands, which remark led the way to the unparalleled foreign labors of the Moravian brethren. Kicherer, the companion of Vanderkemp, by reading the voyages of Cook, had his mind inflamed with a desire to visit distant lands, — a desire which was afterwards sanctified, and became a true zeal for missions.

The relation of geographical and statistical knowledge to the extension of Christ's kingdom is far more intimate than many suppose. There is more reason than most seem to be aware of, for making the communication of appropriate intelligence at the Monthly Concert one leading part of its exercises. Christendom is to be congratulated that there is statedly such a season, which devoutly and expressly contemplates the universal spread of the Gospel, — an occasion which should call into use all the legitimate means of informing and moving the minds of Christians. Not that we would at the Concert, resolve ourselves into a committee or academy for secular investigation, but we would there have geography and all sciences sanctified. Let the mere geologist cleave the strata of the globe, and let the chemist place its elements in his crucible; but let the believer learn to look upon it as God's workmanship, as a temporary staging which upholds immortal beings, who are continually passing off, and the mass of them into outer darkness. A missionary map is a solemn spectacle. An artificial globe, if executed with reference to the moral end of creation, will exhibit lights and shades as cast by the Sun of Righteousness. Bright spots will it shew, with here and there traces of a glancing ray; but its larger tracts will be shrouded with midnight coloring. Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. Can a servant of Christ contemplate a picture of the earth, an evangelical chart, and the sight of his eyes not affect his heart? Can he listen to the tale of human ignorance, superstition and wickedness, and his spirit not be stirred within him? Every boundary which limits the spread of gospel truth is inscribed with the last and unfulfilled command of our Saviour. Every meridian of the unevangelized world is a dark line of shame to the church.

Digitized by Google

The Christian whose title to the name is not questionable, will not avoid, but seek occasions for enlisting his heart in the cause for which his Master died. He will court auxiliaries for drawing out the sensibilities of his soul. "I remember," says Andrew Fuller in his sketch of Dr. Carey, "I remember, on going into the room where he employed himself at his business," — it was a workshop, — "I saw hanging up against the wall a large map, consisting of several sheets of paper pasted together by himself, on which he had drawn with a pen, a place for every nation in the known world, and entered into it whatever he met with in reading relative to its population and religion." This may furnish a hint which any one can improve upon, according as his habits and situation may be.

In the appreciation of knowledge as subsidiary to the advancement of their enterprises, the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light. Alexander the Great had in his train men of science, whose duty it was to learn every thing important relative to the countries he designed to subdue; and also to acquaint themselves with every thing worthy of notice among those whom he had already subdued. The energy, the successes, and the remarkable duration of the Roman sway, were, to a great extent, attributable to means employed for intercommunication between the different and distant parts of the empire. The most durable roads were constructed, traversing the provinces, in all important directions; a common language was diffused; and so far as practicable, and politic, the chief barriers, natural and civil, to a free and rapid correspondence with distant regions were broken down. The Romans well understood in their campaigns, that localities often influence victory more than do courage and numbers. The same holds good, and to a greater degree, in modern tactics. A perfect military map is of the first importance. It is one on which the commander may find every road by which he can advance either with artillery, or only with the musket, every ford in a river, every defile by which he can turn the position of an enemy, — indeed all the localities which can influence his operations. It was, in a great measure, to the excellence of those maps furnished by the *Depot de la Guerre*, that the French armies have, at different times, owed their success. In the early part of this century, a learned geometrician, deeply skilled

Digitized by Google

in the art of war, made a list of French generals, in which he estimated their talents; opposite to an illustrious name was often this note: "He is well acquainted with the map." So, too, under the Great Captain of our Salvation, other things being equal, that corporation, congregation, or individual, best acquainted with statistical and moral geography, will feel most, and do most, in the mighty campaign of universal conquest.

If the Monthly Concert were solely a meeting for intelligence, would its monthly return be too frequent? How many could safely excuse themselves from attending, on the ground that they are sufficiently acquainted with what is doing on the wide field of the world? True, there are no new hemispheres to be brought to light. The wonders of newly-found continents, or immense islands, are at an end, for the westward progress of discovery has dissipated the last dream of an Hesperian region. Polar expeditions may be fitted out, but a stupendous geographical discovery can never be made again. What now remains is to perfect an acquaintance with the topography of the globe, to familiarize the church with the minute and usually repulsive realities of the human race, the general bounds of whose habitations are already known. Can any painstaking for this end, on the part of missionary societies, or of individuals, be excessive? Within forty years, seventeen different expeditions were fitted out in Europe, to explore the Niger. Eleven of the leaders, eighty others who were educated men, besides scores in subordinate capacities, lost their lives in those enterprises. Against such an expedition, no protestation has been raised. Could the churches of England, or of this country, be charged with prodigality in an attempt, as expensive to life and property, in order to explore the moral condition of any one of the African tribes; or, if you please, of the whole African continent?

In regard to the moral condition of our race generally, there is even yet, very little of definite knowledge in the community at large. This ignorance is one main source of that charity which begins at home.

Unfeigned love to the nearest neighbor contains the element of genuine patriotism; sanctified patriotism contains the element of genuine philanthropy; all true Christ-like benevolence embraces the whole world.

Digitized by Google

WILLIAM PENN.

In the countries around the Mediterranean Sea, there has ever prevailed a disposition to clothe religion in sensual forms. Hence the excessively idolatrous character of the old paganism of those regions; and hence, too, that proneness to the veneration of images, which there so early and so foully disfigured Christianity itself. This tendency went so far, that it aroused, in the beginning of the eighth century, an opposite feeling, so strong as to convulse both Church and State by civil wars and controversies; but which only checked, without destroying, this gross and heathenish perversion of religious worship. The opposers of image-worship went so far in their zeal against such abominations, as to demolish every thing of the kind. They thus obtained the name of Iconoclasts, which is the Greek for image-breakers. If such a sect should spring up in our time, and undertake to dash down the false gods of history, they would pull in pieces the stuffed effigies of many who are raised to a factitious renown in order to obscure and dwarf the reputation of men far better than themselves. Such an idoloclast was Coleridge's philosopher:

> "Passionate for ancient truths,
> And honoring with religious love, the great
> Of elder times; he hated to excess,
> With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
> The hollow puppets of a hollow age,
> Ever idolatrous, and changing ever
> Its worthless Idols!"

In the "great chamber of imagery" which forms the Pantheon of modern man-worship, few shrines have fumed with denser clouds of incense than that which is devoted to the fame of the courtly Quaker. That William Penn was well endowed with virtuous and useful gifts is most true. But it is not less true, that he was deformed by many faults, which are studiously kept out of view, in order to give him an undue exaltation. This is partly owing to his having lived in that scandalous age of English history, when under the restored Stuarts, vice, meanness, and impiety so prevailed, that anything like a tolerably decent character seems lofty and pure amid the surrounding degradation. But much of the extravagant praise of Penn seems intended for the purpose

Digitized by Google

of playing him off against the Puritans, and enviously despoiling them of the fame they so well and so hardly earned.

We have long cherished a purpose of doing something toward counteracting this course of procedure, by shewing that Penn was in all respects vastly inferior in greatness of soul to the Puritans, and especially that in the things wherein he dealt most proudly, they were above him. This purpose has recently been much quickened by reading that work of surpassing interest, the "History of England from the Accession of James II.," by Macaulay. This eminent writer sketches the character of Penn with great freedom, and with features very different from those with which his eulogists have delighted to portray him. Macaulay is noted for the boldness of his criticisms on historical personages; but even he flinches a little from assailing the popularity of the reformer of Quakerism. He says: "To speak the whole truth concerning Penn is a task which requires some courage; for he is rather a mythical than a historical person. Rival nations and hostile sects have agreed in canonizing him. England is proud of him. A great commonwealth beyond the Atlantic regards him with a reverence similar to that which the Athenians felt for Theseus, and the Romans for Quirinus." Quakers venerate him as an apostle, other Christians extol him as a bright pattern of goodness, and even the French atheists of the last century praise him for his contempt of priestcraft and his general benevolence. "His name has thus become, throughout all civilized countries, a synonyme for probity and philanthropy."

Macaulay justifies, in part, this exalted estimate. "Penn was, without doubt, a man of eminent virtues. He had a strong sense of religious duty, and a fervent desire to promote the happiness of mankind. On one or two points of high importance, he had notions more correct than were, in his day, common even among men of enlarged minds." Having alluded to these points the historian goes on to correct the overweening conceits with which vapid orators have stuffed the doublet of their hero. "His writings and his life furnish abundant proofs that he was not a man of strong sense. He had no skill in reading the characters of others. His confidence in persons less virtuous than himself led him into great errors and misfortunes. His enthusiasm for one great principle sometimes impelled him to violate other great principles which he ought to have held sacred. Nor was

Digitized by Google

his integrity altogether proof against the temptations to which it was exposed in that splendid and polite, but deeply corrupted society, with which he now mingled." After alluding, in general terms, to many defections from his own peculiar principles into which Penn was seduced "by royal smiles, by female blandishments, by the insinuating eloquence and delicate flattery of veteran diplomatists and courtiers," Macaulay taxes him with heavier charges: "Unhappily it cannot be concealed, that he bore a chief part in some transactions condemned, not merely by the rigid code of the society to which he belonged, but by the general sense of all honest men." It is true, that he afterwards solemnly protested that he pocketed no part of the illicit and disgraceful gains he had procured for those who coaxed him into acting as their tool. But giving full credit to this paltry apology for taking part in such shameful transactions, what does it avail? "Bribes may be offered to vanity, as well as to cupidity; and it is impossible to deny that Penn was cajoled into bearing a part in some unjustifiable transactions, of which others enjoyed the profits." *

The name of William Penn occurs somewhat frequently in the first two volumes of this history. It is only once connected with an honorable transaction, — his agency in procuring the liberation of some fifteen hundred Quakers, whom the accession of James II. found in prison.† In every other instance where his name is found on Macaulay's pages, it is in connections which do it little honor. He was a special favorite of that last end of the dynasty of the Stuarts, in whose veins crept the basest dregs of their blood. With this man, Penn was a special favorite. He earned this "bad eminence," by his readiness to any unhandsome work which could pleasure that "living libel" upon royalty and mankind. The system of favoritism devolves upon those who are supposed to have free access to the ear and to the good-will of the prince, the office of solicitor general in behalf of all who can

* Macaulay's general views of the character of William Penn are largely sanctioned by Grahame, in the second volume of his History of the United States, republished at Boston under the special sanction of Hon. Josiah Quincy, LL. D.; and also by Chalmers and Benjamin Franklin.

† This bigoted, papist king found that he could indulge the Quakers and the Romanists, without relaxing the intolerance of the laws against the other persecuted sects.

Digitized by Google

secure the influence of the minion in behalf of their selfish schemes. So largely was Penn employed in this business, — this "kitchen cabinet" drudgery, — that he boasted that he could easily, while his influence at the court continued, have made a hundred and twenty thousand pounds. He must have done a deal of this unhandsome work!

Macaulay gives an account of one of these "fair business transactions." In that tyrannous time, there were innumerable prosecutions for political offences. Multitudes of the wealthier part of those who were opposed to the sovereign's policy, were accused and imprisoned, under various suspicions and pretences, with a view to extort a ransom by selling pardons to them. Large sums were paid by these victims to purchase their escape from the tribunal of the ferocious and abhorred Chief Justice Jeffries. The Duke of Monmouth, reputed to be a natural son of Charles I., had made an ill-concerted and unfortunate insurrection in the West of England. When he came to Taunton, he was received with civic honors, and a number of young girls, unconscious that they were committing high treason, walked in the procession, under the orders of their school-mistress. After the insurrection had been bloodily suppressed, the Queen's "maids of honor," an office which has too often been filled by those as void of maiden purity as of true honor, solicited and obtained the privilege of wringing what money they could out of the parents of those poor children, some of whom were less than ten years old. The hapless children were seized and imprisoned without mercy. One of them was thrown into a prison where the jail-fever was raging, of which she sickened and died. Another actually died of fright, at a hideous roar from the judicial butcher Jeffries, in giving directions in his court, to the jailer, respecting her. The "maids of honor," falsely so called, having failed to induce some gentleman to undertake their scandalous commission, applied to Friend Penn. "It should seem," as Macaulay dryly remarks, "that a little of the pertinacious scrupulosity which he had often shewn about taking off his hat would not have been altogether out of place on this occasion." He undertook the affair, however; and squeezed out of the afflicted parents, some two thousand pounds sterling as the price of the royal pardon. It is probable, that for this base brokerage, Penn received no other percentage than the good will of the rapacious "maids of honor,"

Digitized by Google

to be turned to account when he had some favor to ask, through the queen, for himself and his fellow-sectaries.

For a man who made the highest professions of humanity, Penn seems to have had a remarkable taste for witnessing executions. One day he hurried from Cheapside, — where he had seen Alderman Cornish hanged, drawn, and quartered, — to Tyburn, where Elizabeth Gaunt was burned alive, for aiding the escape of a man accused of treason, who came back, and for money turned informer against her. These were among the foulest judicial murders which disgraced those black and bloody times. That night, Penn must have "supped full with horrors."

The object which was ever uppermost in the heart of the perjured bigot, James II., was the overthrow of the Church of England, and the reëstablishment of popery. He steadily pursued this object by a course of policy compounded of dark and crooked intrigues, interwoven with open violations of the constitution and laws of England, which he had sworn to maintain. Among these intrigues, he had a plan for obtaining the coöperation of all classes of Protestant dissenters from the established church. By a coalition between Dissenters and Papists, he hoped to put the latter into a situation to overthrow the church by law established; and then to crush the Dissenters in their turn. Great efforts were made to corrupt the leading men in the various Dissenting interests, some of whom were induced to fall in with the wishes of the king, though with the loss of nearly all their influence with their old friends. The Dissenters, in general, saw through the trap, and scorned the tempting bait. For bringing the Congregationalists into the royal snare, the chief reliance was placed on Stephen Lobb, one of their ministers. This man, from having been a rabid opposer of the government, became a supple and servile tool for its purposes. Says Macaulay: "With Lobb was closely connected William Penn. Penn had never been a strong-headed man; the life which he had been leading during two years had not a little impaired his moral sensibility; and if his conscience ever reproached him, he comforted himself by repeating that he had a good and noble end in view, and that he was not paid for his services in money." In the oil of this Jesuitical morality, he soaked his conscience, till it arrived to all the pliability needful to make it a convenient instrument for the twisted policies of the king.

Digitized by Google

In gaining over the Baptists, attempts were made to secure the aid of John Bunyan, and William Kiffin. Bunyan, who died about that time, almost with his latest breath abjured the scheme. Kiffin was a wealthy London merchant, and a preacher. He was a man of the highest probity, and possessed great weight of character. He was old, and broken-hearted at the loss of his two stripling grandsons, who had been ruthlessly slaughtered at the shambles of Jeffries. Here, too, Penn was set to work; and tried to wheedle the stern and incorruptible old saint, by the promise of an alderman's gown! But neither the minion nor his master could make the worthy Kiffin swerve from his fidelity.

The tyrant, disappointed of the aid he expected to obtain by purchasing the Dissenters, went a shorter way to work. He began to dismiss Protestants from his counsels and employments, and to violate the whole law of the land by thrusting Papists into the chief places in church and state. Even Penn, notwithstanding his purblind subserviency to the royal will and pleasure, began to discern that the king was driving toward his object too fast for safety. He began to suggest "equivalents," (a word which then first came into use among the English,) for pacifying the Protestants. One of Penn's proposed "equivalents" was, that the crown patronage should be divided into three equal parts, with one of which the Papists, who were not one in fifty of the population of the country, should content themselves. Preposterous as this "equivalent" would have been, it was made yet more absurd by the consideration, that there was no way provided to keep the king and his myrmidons satisfied with their extravagant share of the "spoils of office." So well pleased was James with the fawning sycophancy of this Friend, that when at Chester, on a royal ramble, he deigned to attend the Quaker meeting, and listen to a sermon from Penn's mellifluous tongue.

One of the king's most despotic outrages, was his attempt to force a papistical parasite into the presidency of Magdalene College, Oxford, contrary to the statutes of the founder, and the oaths of the members. The College resisted nobly and vigorously. The wrathful king even went to Oxford to coerce the refractory Fellows. Having tried threats and caresses in vain, he tried the arts of William Penn upon them. Penn ventured to remonstrate faintly against the violence and injustice of the king; but the king was obstinate, and "the courtly Quaker, therefore, did his best

Digitized by Google

to seduce the college from the path of right." First he tried to intimidate the sturdy Fellows. Then he counselled them at least to temporize. But when he found them stoutly resolved to obey conscience at all risks, he tried other courses. He called together a few of the leading members of the college, and after much smooth talk and professions of sympathy, held out the lure of a bishopric to the chief man among them, if they would succumb to the royal command. "Penn," says Macaulay, "had passed his life in declaiming against a hireling ministry. He held that he was bound to refuse the payment of tithes, and this even when he had bought land chargeable with tithes, and had been allowed the value of the tithes in the purchase-money. According to his own principles, he would have committed a great sin, if he had interfered for the purpose of obtaining a benefice on the most honorable terms for the most pious divine. Yet to such a degree had his manners been corrupted by evil communications, and his understanding obscured by inordinate zeal for a single object, that he did not scruple to become a broker in simony of a peculiarly discreditable kind, and to use a bishopric as a bait to tempt a divine to perjury." But all his lures were in vain; and his master had to effect his object by arraying the carbines of his cavalry. Penn was the subservient instrument of a popish and tyrannical prince in his efforts to prostrate the liberties, and Romanize the religion, of the country; and yet this "servant of all work," seems to have imagined "that nobody but himself had a conscience." How different his course from that of the inflexible Puritans, those staunch foes of despotism and popery!

It is not to be supposed, that Penn retained the confidence of the Quakers, while he was basking in the sunshine of royal favor; and while he was closeted with the king, when peers of the realm were for hours kept waiting for admission. "He was soon surrounded by flatterers and suppliants. His house at Kensington was sometimes thronged, at his hour of rising, by more than two hundred suitors." His own sect, meanwhile, grew shy of him; and many of them affirmed that he was secretly a Popish priest and a Jesuit. These groundless jealousies greatly abridged his popularity and influence with the zealous Friends.

There are other points, on which we meant to touch; but we must be content with one. Certain ignorant declaimers are in the habit of reproaching the settlers of New England for not

Digitized by Google

purchasing their lands of the Indians, as William Penn did his by the famous treaty at Philadelphia. Now the fact is beyond dispute, that our colonists, from the beginning, purchased all the territory they occupied. And if they paid but little for it, they paid all that it was worth at the time. The wilderness they bought had no pecuniary value but what was afterwards created by the industry of the purchasers. Fifty years before Penn landed on the shores of the Delaware, our fathers had made many treaties still extant, for the sale and cession of the lands they needed. This was a point on which they were particularly scrupulous.

Nor can it be pretended that Penn paid more liberally than our fathers for the rich territory he acquired; for his treaty has long been lost, and no man knows what was the value received by the savage owners. One part of the transaction has not a very honorable look. The ceded tract was not to be laid out by surveyors' theodolites, which are known among the Western tribes, as Colonel Fremont tells us, by the expressive name of "land-stealers." The tract was to include as much space as a man could walk around in one day. Penn employed a long-limbed follower of his, who stilted it over the lot with such portentous strides, that the Indians grew surly, and feeling that they had literally been circumvented, refused to stand to the terms. Some who were with Penn, and who held that a bargain is a bargain, advised that they should be compelled to adhere to the contract. Nay, nay, quoth Penn, hurt not the poor creatures. Give them a few more yards of calico, — or whatever toys sufficed to satisfy those children of nature. And yet this treaty is foolishly lauded as the first example of fair and righteous dealing in this line with the aborigines. Even Macaulay, who has little respect for Penn, says of him: "He will always be mentioned with honor as a founder of a colony, who did not in his dealings with a savage people, abuse the strength derived from civilization." We verily believe, that if this transaction had taken place in New England, it would have been commonly regarded as a Yankee trick, and as one of the smallest of the kind. And yet our fathers would have scorned such overreaching; and even if they had resented it somewhat harshly, we own that in such case we should feel more sympathy with the "Presbyterian sour," than with the "Quaker sly."

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

POLEMICAL AND PRACTICAL RELIGION. — It is a singular happiness of Evangelical preachers, that, in the height of religious revival, and in the holiest fervors of their work, they are to urge the same doctrines which they maintain in the hour of controversy. On the awakened sinner, asking in anguish of soul, what he shall do to be saved, they press that Redeemer whose person unites the nature of God with ours, who allures our confidence by all that is human in his being, and assures it by all that is divine. Whether as controversialists or revivalists, they insist alike on the utter depravity and ruin of the sinner, on the necessity and sufficiency of the atoning sacrifice, and on the need of the grace of the Holy Spirit, as the personal Sanctifier and Comforter of the regenerate soul.

How different is the case with the advocates of Unitarianism! In controversy, they have contended for the mere humanity of Jesus; and he is complimented with the title of Saviour, simply by reason of the salutary influence of his teaching and example. But is this statue of ice lifted up in the meeting for devotional purposes? Or do they not rather sigh for that life-warm faith which springs only from vital union with the Divine in Christ? What a damper it would be in such a scene, to go to speaking of Jesus as the very best and most exemplary of men!

So, too, in controversy, the Unitarians zealously vindicate human nature from the charge of depravity, and speak with enthusiasm, like Dr. Channing, of "adoring the divinity within us." Reason is exalted to the sphere of the god-like; and man is made to save himself, so far as he needs salvation, by might and merit all his own. But will this strain answer for the conference-meeting? Or must they there bewail the ensnaring and enslaving power of sin, deplore their worldliness, coldness, and deadness of heart, and ask to "receive power from on high"? Would it not spoil the spirit of a praying circle, to go to extolling the nobleness of mankind, and the efficacy of human merit?

In doctrinal discussions, the Unitarians describe conversion on its human side, as the sinner's own act in the ordinary exercise of his natural faculties. The Holy Spirit has been spoken of as divine influence in general, and as not more specially concerned in the conversion of the sinner, than in any other event belonging to human affairs. But how instinctively is it felt that such views would be wholly out of place in the revival meeting! It would instantly quell the life of such an occasion, to speak of any thing but man's weakness and dependence, or to call in any aid but that of the life-giving Spirit of grace. It would not do, at such a time, to speak of deep concern for the salvation of the soul, of sudden conversion, and of overpowering religious joy, as being so many fanatical and hurtful excitements. When the Unitarians feel it necessary to make direct and united efforts to raise the tone of spiritual feeling among themselves, they are constrained to leave, at least in appearance, the ground they hold

Digitized by Google

in time of controversy; and to press such considerations, and use such language, as produce, for the time being, a very strong resemblance to the revival-meetings of evangelical Christians.

These are most suggestive facts, and deserve the profoundest consideration. What ought we to think of a system of religious belief, which, in the solemn season of reviving spirituality and religious life, must forget, as far as possible, its own distinctive features; and copy the measures, and borrow the phraseology, of the system to which it is diametrically opposed?

MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND. — Of the first and second volumes of this work, which are all that is yet given to the public, four or five rival editions have appeared on this side of the Atlantic. Surely no living writer in the English language enjoys so wide a popularity as the Great Essayist. This History will form his most enduring monument. It has many marks of hasty and heedless composition, and numerous repetitions and recapitulations; and it does not very much abound in those splendid rhetorical passages, and in that sarcastic and epigrammatic style, which chiefly make up his minor historical essays. Still it is rich in instruction, and alive with interest. In particular, it is remarkable for sketching the history and condition of the *people*, quite as much as the acts of their rulers. It affords striking proofs of wonderful improvement in the state of the mass of the English nation, whatever our grumbling radicals are pleased to say to the contrary. The horrors of civil war are powerfully set forth. The foolishness of the custom of hereditary magistrates is made more apparent than the author himself is aware of. His work will help on the recent change in the popular estimate of the great men of the seventeenth century, by which the memory of Cromwell and his compatriots is rescued from long-abiding historical injustice.

As respects the Puritans generally, Macaulay bears high testimony to their pious patriotism, and zeal for liberty. In an occasional sarcasm at their rigor of morals, he betrays a want of sympathy with them, just sufficient to shew that his more favorable testimonies are disinterested and sincere. We cannot let him alone, however, without a comment on the absurdity of his keenest jest at their expense. "Bear-baiting," he says, "then a favorite diversion of high and low, was the abomination which most strongly stirred the wrath of the austere sectaries." "The Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators!" The pleasure taken by a brutal mob of spectators, in making themselves still more brutish by looking on with ecstacy to see their mastiffs tearing poor bruin to pieces, is a pleasure sufficiently odious to excite strong aversion in any good man. His humanity might weep for the degradation of his fellow-bipeds, even if it had no tear to spare for their shaggy victim. "Bear-garden manners," is a proverbial phrase for coarse and rude ferocity. But how does Mr. Macaulay discover that the Puritans felt no pity for the tortured animals? Why, forsooth, he informs us, in a long note, that Colonel Pride, and other parliamentary officers, used to shoot the poor bears whenever they found them so abused. Shoot them! Did they?

Digitized by Google

And pray tell us, O most ingenious historian, when you have done chuckling over this bare-faced joke, what ought they to have done with those useless and dangerous "vermin?" Should they, in tender mercy, have been kept in iron cages for the term of their natural lives? Or would it have been better to turn them loose on the world, as our modern self-styled "prisoner's friends," wish us to do with all the murderers, burglars, and robbers in the penitentiary? We would not have complained of Mr. Macaulay for palming off this witticism, if he had not thus attempted to give it a serious historical basis.

DEATH OF DR. WEGSCHEIDER. — The following we find in the Deutsche Kirchenfreund for April: "On the 27th of January, at the age of seventy-eight, died Professor Wegscheider, the noted author of a system of dogmatics, written in Latin, which, some twenty years ago, was in great repute. It is remarkable that the learned heads of the elder, or more vulgar Rationalism, Röhr, Bretschneider, and Wegscheider, have been summoned into eternity in such rapid succession. Wegscheider was a cold man, of spotless character; but without spirit or vivacity. He has, for a long time, lost all influence as a teacher and author; and was, like Paulus at Heidelberg, but a breathing dead man. When we were studying at Halle, he had scarce half a dozen hearers; though twenty years before, hundreds sat at his feet."

The leaders of the old Rationalism in Germany have a dreadful account to render, for overthrowing the faith of the great body of their countrymen in all that is supernatural about Christianity. Scarcely had they begun to exult in their success, when they saw their converts rush by them and tread them down, in their impetuosity to leap into the gulf of Pantheism. Most of the German names are significant; and that of Wegscheider, — "one who departs," — seems ominous of those of whom, "the Spirit speaketh expressly, that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith." Some of the better sort of Germans used, by a slight change, to call him Wegschneider, — "one who cuts away," — because, as they said, he cut away so much of the gospel. Indeed, he cut away all but the handle he held it by; and his disciples, seeing no use in clinging to a bare handle, cast aside the poor relic with contempt. "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered!"

PAMPHLETS. — *Rev. Dr. Worcester's Plymouth Discourse*; 1848. — It is rare that we fall in with a sermon so replete with information of such importance, and at the same time so counter to the stream of popular prejudice and error. After shewing that the settlement of New England was a missionary enterprise, it gives more of our ecclesiastical history than can be found any where else in the same space.

A Correction of Erroneous Statements Concerning the Embarkation of Messrs. Judson and Newell, A. D., 1812. — This is a republication, in pamphlet-form, of the article furnished by Dr. Worcester for the Christian Review, in which he so vigorously disposes of the false charges uttered under the alleged sanction of Dr. Judson, against the early friends of American Missions.

Digitized by Google

Sermon, Charge, and Right-Hand of Fellowship, at the Ordination of Rev. Josiah Tyler. — These are the words uttered by a brother-in-law, a father, and an own brother, in setting apart a young candidate for "the baptism of sufferings" in behalf of the Zulus of Southern Africa. Though this ordination was very much in the family, it was an eminently Christian spectacle, uniting deep feeling with true dignity, such as must command the sympathy of the whole household of faith.

Sabbath Desecration. — We have here a brief report recently adopted by the Franklin County Conference of Churches. It is drawn up with care, presenting valuable statistics, and a brief, forcible, and eloquent plea for the sanctification of the feast-day of the resurrection of the Lord. We may as well remark in passing, that the late anti-Sabbath Convention in this city died as soon as born, and was flung aside, unburied and unwept. After loud proclamations of a mass-meeting to last two or three days, a small knot of come-outers came together; and being soon weary of listening to one another's nonsense, which no one else came to hear, dispersed on the second day, and were heard of no more.

ORDINATIONS.

Feb. 8. Mr. Morgan L. Eastman, Lisbon, St. Lawrence Co., N. Y.
" 21. Mr. Christopher Cushing, Edwards Church, Boston.
" 28. Mr. Josiah Tyler, East Windsor, Con.; as a Missionary to the Zulus, in South Africa.
" " Mr. Hyman A. Wilder, South Adams, Mass., also a Missionary to the Zulus.
" " Mr. M. C. Bronson, Jay, N. Y.
" " Mr. N. W. Williams, Shrewsbury, Mass.
Mar. 13. Mr. Henry E. Parker, Eastport, Me.; Evangelist.
" " Mr. George J. Harrison, Collegiate Pastor, Franklin, Con.
" 21. Mr. David A. Strong, South Deerfield, Mass.
" 28. Mr. Horace Pratt, Phipsburg, Me.

INSTALLATIONS.

Feb. 13. Rev. T. S. Hubbard, Chelsea, Vt.
" 21. Rev. William Miller, Collegiate Pastor, Gill, Mass.
" 28. Rev. Cyrus W. Allen, Coleraine.
Mar. 1. Rev. R. H. Seeley, North Church, Springfield.
" 7. Rev. James L. Wright, Burlington, Con.
" 21. Rev. Eli Thurston, Central Church, Fall River, Mass.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Jan. 27. Rev. Diodate Brockway, Ellington, Con., æ. 73.
Feb. 15. Rev. David Palmer, Townsend, Mass., æ. 80.
Mar. 2. Rev. Pomeroy Belden, East Parish, Amherst, æ. 38.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] JUNE, 1849. [No. 6.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

A LARGE extra edition of this number of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY has been struck off. It contains a searching and thorough review of Dr. Bushnell's recent work, occupying sixty pages.

Booksellers and others will be supplied on moderate terms for cash.

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office nine dollars, shall receive six copies of the Christian Observatory for one year.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., PUBLISHERS,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863, Sept. 4.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

Vol. III. JUNE, 1849. No. 6.

REVIEW.

God in Christ. Three Discourses delivered at New Haven, Cambridge, and Andover, with a Preliminary Dissertation on Language: by Horace Bushnell. Hartford: Brown and Parsons. 1849. 12mo. Pp. 356.

It is seldom that a book comes forth with so much of expectation, and of interest in advance, as this. Had it approached us from any source beyond the pale of New England theology, it would have excited little attention. When orthodoxy is assailed from without, however furiously, its friends sit calmly in their impregnable defences, without anxiety as to the result. But when we see one of the garrison, with a lighted torch in his hand, arranging the magazine, it naturally excites some commotion till the danger is removed.

Our personal relations and feelings to Dr. Bushnell are such, that we would gladly pass over his trespasses with fraternal indulgence; and we could take pleasure in giving prominence to every brilliant sentiment and pious aspiration his pages may contain. Nay, if we were only anxious to court popularity as liberal and amiable reviewers, we must resort to the obvious expedient of glossing our unqualified condemnation of the book, with professions of admiration at the writer's talents, and at the occasional passages of truth and eloquence which intervene among his abounding errors and mysticism. But, for the business in hand, neither we nor this author, personally considered, are any thing. The only question relates to the character of the volume itself.

Digitized by Google

It is somewhat vauntingly put forth, as a grand contribution to theological science, which it proposes to revolutionize and reform. It now belongs to the public, or to any one who chooses to read. And all that the public in general, or any particular reader, may have to do with it, is to know whether its teachings are true. While it was in its author's hands, it was part of himself. Now that he has parted with it, the book has become an impersonal thing. We shall examine it merely as a contribution to science, which the sea might have thrown upon the shore. We shall discuss it as a chemist might analyze a meteoric stone, which has fallen from the upper air. In matters of this kind, we can only ask for fact and verity, following the apostolic rule of "knowing no man after the flesh."

The oddest feature of the book is the "Preliminary Dissertation on Language." We have waited long for those "Three Discourses." But before reaching them, we must travel through an Introduction occupying one-third of the volume. We are put back even beyond our familiar alphabet; and then are brought through a long and winding passage, before we are allowed to unroll and decypher the mystic scrolls.

Why is this preliminary Dissertation here? Is it necessary to enable the reader of the discourses to understand them? Then why was it not at least as necessary for the hearers, for whom those discourses were primarily prepared? How could the orator venture to address those multitudes, until they had been initiated into his peculiar views of language?

A large part of this Dissertation relates to matters merely literary, and having but a remote bearing upon the points treated in the Discourses. Our author looks upon the writers on the original unity of human languages with a supercilious air, and flippantly condemns their conclusions. He then constructs a theory of his own, to account for the origin of language, containing so many suppositions that can never be verified, as to remind us of the following sentence in Sir Walter Scott: "Here stands Theory, a scroll in her hand, full of deep and mysterious combinations of figures, the least failure in any one of which may alter the result entirely; and which you must take on trust, — for who is capable to go through and check them?" Dr. Bushnell, after briefly noticing the theories of others, and finding in them, as he thinks, too many contradictions even for him, proceeds to

Digitized by Google

"excite our younger theologians" to the investigation of some sixteen points, forming the main body of the Dissertation.

We do not deem it important to go over all this ground. Suffice it to say, that the drift of the whole is to bring logic into contempt, to make definitions useless, and to produce the feeling that language, which Coleridge calls an "intermediate something between matter and spirit," is so insufficient a medium for the communication of thought, as never to be understood aright. We do not marvel that this writer should speak so testily of logic; for certainly that science, judging from this book, has conferred but few favors upon him. As to definitions, he holds that they may be "both consistent and false, — false, because of their consistency." P. 5. It would seem, by this, that inconsistency is the only sign of truth; and this may be the reason why he so much approves of its use. "In fact," he says, "no man is more certain to run himself into mischievous error, than he who places implicit confidence in definitions." The only way, then, to avoid mischievous error in theological science is by an indeterminate and unexplained use of language. And yet, strange to say, he undertakes in this very book to give definitions of *justification*, *atonement*, and other important theological terms.

This character for utter uncertainty and necessary obscurity is imputed to language by him for two purposes; the first relating to himself, and the other to the religious public. As it relates to himself, it seems designed to answer the purposes of the cloud with which Venus, according to Virgil, was wont to invest her Æneas, thus helping him to go safely through the enemy's host. Who will venture to call into question the soundness of Dr. Bushnell's orthodoxy, now that he has demonstrated his own speech to be unintelligible? His expressions, or forms of truth, or to use his fancy term, his "molds" of thought, may not look quite right; but we must remember that just so far as they seem erroneous, so far we misunderstand him. This sort of subterfuge may be very convenient for him, but it is somewhat trying to his critical readers. We think that he will not find this privilege conceded to him; and that the common sense of mankind will decide, that if he prints a book in human language, it must be interpreted and understood according to the established laws of language. If language is not capable of expressing his thoughts with precision and clearness, then let him keep silence, till he can

Digitized by Google

find some reliable medium through which to impart them. Now he only gives us hints, which we are to understand as we may; with an assurance, to begin with, that we shall half the time hit upon a wrong solution. According to his view of language, truth can struggle into words only by torturing itself into all sorts of paradoxes and contradictions, and then it will have but a partial and distorted embodiment. This is discouraging and distressing. We see not how God himself can give us a revelation in human speech, which shall be any thing better than a book of riddles, incapable of any certain and satisfactory explanation. And great indeed is the temerity of our author in venturing to preach and print in any language, without more certainty that he shall be any thing better than a blind leader of the blind.

The other purpose which Dr. Bushnell appears to have in view while putting forth his theory of language, relates to the public. Having argued that language cannot exhibit the reality of truth, he would have us desist from definite statements in regard to the Trinity and the Atonement, and to cease from doctrinal formulas in general. He would have men leave all dogmas involved in mist, and seek for union in a revival of spiritual life under cover of that mist. This is to be effected, by prevailing with the Unitarians to abandon their stiff prejudices against all mystery in religion; and by prevailing with the Orthodox to renounce their attachment to creeds, or definitive statements of religious belief. We are to meet on a common ground of mystery, where all will be so dark, that we shall practically be of one color.

Deeming it needless to tarry longer upon the Preliminary Dissertation, we proceed to the main body of the book.

To characterize this part of it in brief, we may say that it contains, first, a rejection of the commonly received doctrine of a proper Trinity in the Godhead, substituting for it a pantheistic form of Sabellianism; secondly, a rejection of the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice by the death of Christ, substituting for it a manifestation of divine love for man, as the means of an at-one-ment with God; thirdly, an invective against specific statements of fundamental truths, and a plea for indefiniteness in theological knowledge and instruction.

Before proceeding to a critical examination of the book, we shall state some of the general impressions which it has made upon us.

Digitized by Google

We are of the opinion that if a book of the same character with this had been written by a member of the medical or legal profession on subjects connected with his department of science, a question would have arisen at once whether the writer were wholly sane. The wildest assaults are made on the most stable facts of revelation; propositions are laid down with great confidence and an air of defiance, which, if received, would subvert every school of theology in evangelical Christendom, confute our books of practical piety, — the Pilgrim's Progress, The Force of Truth, and our practical commentaries on the Bible; make it necessary to give new instructions to Christian missionaries around the globe; and in short, confound all Christian churches with the discovery that they are fundamentally wrong.

There is a daring spirit in the book, which it is difficult to describe. This will give it a charm with many. A certain kind of interest necessarily attaches to a man who ventures, as this writer does, into the mysteries of the Godhead; and speaks as he does, of Gethsemane and its bitter cup, of Calvary and the sufferer. But should an æronaut in mid heaven hang by his hands outside of his balloon, and disappear from view in this position, admiration at his courage would be prevented by a feeling of indignation at such trifling with his life, and with the sensibilities of men. Any one can gain the notoriety which this author has done, in any department of science, provided he is willing to deny the most obvious truths in nature, and shed the fascinating light of fancy on the system of creation thus broken and confused. This writer, in a humble degree, and at a far remove, is what Berkeley was among metaphysicians, when he undertook to demonstrate that the external world has no real existence, being produced from our minds. Probably the world will be affected somewhat less by the speculations of this book, than it was by Berkeley's visionary system, though the author evidently expects a different result. We owe it to the honor of our science and profession, to set forth this book in its true light, as medical men expose pretended improvements in their science.

We are not so forgetful of what is due to justice and propriety, as to substitute ridicule for reason in speaking of this book. We shall reason upon it in due time. But there is a ludicrousness in it, taken as a whole, which almost prevents us from treating it in a serious manner, notwithstanding the solemn

Digitized by Google

nature of some of its subjects, — a ludicrousness which will be most apparent to the best educated reader. This consists in the relation of the several parts to each other. The first two Discourses authoritatively, but in a somewhat obscure manner, setting forth new theories; followed by an invective against dogmatism; the whole prefaced by a Dissertation on the deceitfulness of language in theological science; together with a set piece, deprecating with some contempt, any criticism upon the whole performance — produce an effect upon the reader not far from the ridiculous. Were we to indulge in a satirical vein, in speaking of the work, we might compare it to a Book of Pictures by a rope-dancer, containing the following preface: Ground and Lofty Tumbling; to which is prefixed an admonition to the reader, that he cannot be sure at any moment, whether the performer is down or up; followed by a protest against being laughed at, with some faces made up at those who shall dare to laugh; the whole concluded with an argument on the folly of ever attempting to make men keep step.

There is one presentation which the writer makes of himself, which will strike every observing and pious mind, though it may not have been accustomed to the criticism of books. We refer to the way in which he deals with things associated in the mind of a Christian, with profoundest awe and deepest religious experience. He reminds us of the French police officer, Petion, who brought back the fugitive Louis and the royal ladies in a carriage to Paris. He ate an orange in the carriage, in the presence of the ladies, with a certain "brusque familiarity," and tossed the peel out of the window very near the king's face. There are passages in this book which have made us think of Petion.

It has not, for many years, fallen to us to read a book in which an author assumes so important and elevated a position in his own esteem. Much, however, must be pardoned to the semi-inspiration of a man who is raised up to alter the opinions of entire Christendom. No offence was taken when it was said exultingly by one, — as our author seems to feel that it might truly be said by him without offence, — how much disaster and trouble were borne by the people of the Lord, "till I, Deborah, arose, till I arose, a mother in Israel." Three great occasions were prepared for him to evolve these "views," which, he says, "I seem to have had only about the same agency in forming, as in preparing the

Digitized by Google

blood I circulate, and the anatomic frame I occupy." P. 98. "If they are rejected universally, then I leave them to time, as the body of Christ was left, believing that after three days they will rise again." P. 116. May he not be one of the two Apocalyptical witnesses? He seems to prefer, however, the more honorable mission for his book to have a future resurrection, not like theirs, but like the resurrection of the Redeemer of the world. "Instigated by" an "incautious warmth," he says, "I accepted the occasion offered [to deliver the discourse on the atonement,] as offered not to me, but to my subject." Thus the fulness of time had come, and kings and prophets now will see these discourses, while their predecessors died without the sight. Great ideas have a destiny as sure as the ages; occasions are prepared for them; then they have their inauguration; three of them were inaugurated in that one year, in which our author spoke before three seminaries of learning in New England. Now he marches them forth from conquering to conquer. "Going forth," he says, "in silence, having time on their side, and God in company, they will open their way." Majestic "congress!" Lift up your heads, O ye gates! We have never read a book whose author cherished such a decided and confident expectation of a blessing on his labors.

The author is not unconscious of an unwonted power over the human mind. He tells the assembled clergy of Connecticut, the venerated and time-honored sons of that mother of good and wise men, that "God is a being so vast, that when I drew out the conception of him as existing in himself, I presume it was somewhat painful to you." P. 180. Many of them, no doubt, trembling under his prophetic rod, wished him to "spare their aching sight." He moved before the assembly at Cambridge in a half-revealing state, the prerogative of the ancient Delphi: "You will not require of me to be so intelligible here, as at the close." P. 192. He had many things to say, but they could not bear them then; so the light was let in upon them as they could best receive it. He promised them signs and wonders: "I shall carry you into a region separate from all speculation, or theologising; and there, what I now dismiss, I shall virtually reclaim and restore." The "Presto" of magic, the "Open Sesame" of Oriental tales, is acted here. He commiserates, as he looks forth from his great mantle, our limited self-knowledge. "Few

Digitized by Google

persons are aware how intently our mental instinct labors to throw all its subjects of thought and feeling into objectivity." P. 246. And again: "Many persons are not aware of the manner in which subjective truths, thoughts, sentiments, and changes, often find objective representations, which, though wholly unlike in form, are yet their virtual equivalents." P. 250. He bestows upon his readers, in this connection, his opinion, that the figure of "God's judgment book" is a good equivalent to our "hidden memory."

He does not stop to join himself with other men, — as when the apostle says, "And not to me only, but to them also that love his appearing;" — but rises higher than this, yes, to a sublime height, when he says, that "the true reviving of religion" is a theme "dear above all others, I am persuaded, not to me only, but to the heart of God Himself." P. 280. He seems like the highest Alpine summit which receives the earliest rays of the sun. "It comes to me publicly, as relating to bodies of Christian ministers, and circles of believers in distant places, that they are longing for some fuller manifestation of grace, and debating the possibility of another and holier order of Christian life." P. 298. "Two great truths," he says, "of the highest practical import, need to be set in the minds of all students of theology and all preachers of Christ, as probably they never have been, since theology began to be attempted." P. 331. Then in a new paragraph he reveals this great discovery in its primal part: "First, that no man really knows Christ, or can learn, or be taught the Christian truth, who is not in the spirit of Christ." The second hardly seems to sustain the expectation excited by the announcement: "We need to distinguish more accurately than is generally done, between the idea of a Christian minister and that of a Christian preacher." The Whitefields, and Edwards's, and Bellamys, and other worthies, from the days of the golden-mouthed Chrysostom, had failed, it would seem, to inculcate the difference between being a mere minister of professional duty, and a preacher of righteousness, baptized with the spirit of the truth as it is in Jesus. This it was left for our author to do. With the same deep impression of the great work which he had been doing in the three Discourses, he solemnly bows at the conclusion of them, and says: "I have given you sufficient reason, if not to embrace, at least, to con-

Digitized by Google

sider with profound deliberation, the view I have stated. If I am right, nothing is wanted now," — "but simply to recover from this ancient lapse into dogma." P. 352.

A familiar sentence written for a copy in writing-books when we were young, was this: "Modesty is a quality which highly adorns a woman." It used to occur to us whether that quality was unseemly in a man. Some small measure of it would not have been unbecoming in this author, considering that there were many in the assemblies that heard him, and that there are many among his readers, who, it is generally supposed, have as late information on all important subjects, as himself.

Among the most noticeable features of this book, are the remarkable absence of Scripture, and its low views of inspiration. If as many pages have ever been written on the Trinity and the Atonement by a believer in those doctrines, with so slight a reference to the Holy Bible, we are at a loss to find them. We notice in this connexion the following example. The writer quotes from Pascal this string of paradoxes: "What a chimera, then, is man! What a novelty! What a chaos! What a subject of contradiction! A judge of every thing, and yet a feeble worm of the earth; the depositary of truth, and yet a mere heap of uncertainty; the glory and the outcast of the universe. If he boasts, I humble him; if he humbles himself, I boast of him; and always contradict him, till he is brought to comprehend that he is an incomprehensible monster." Upon this, Dr. B. proceeds to say: "Scarcely inferior in vivacity and power, is the familiar passage of Paul: 'as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.'" P. 56. If his piety and taste will characterize this inspired passage, as "scarcely inferior" to the one from Pascal, we cannot wonder at his slight dependence upon the Word of God for aid in the proof and illustration of his themes. Low views of inspiration in the book appear, for example, in the application of his favorite idea, with which the book opens; namely: that the peculiarities of individual minds impart an inseparable coloring to truth. Inspiration, he seems to think, has no filtering or bleaching power strong enough to give us a pure article. Paul, according to him, is a dialectic, John a mystic, James a moralizer, Peter a homi-

Digitized by Google

letic; and, inclining to the rationalistic view of the authorship of the epistle to the Hebrews, he says: "perhaps a fifth in the epistle to the Hebrews, who is a Christian templar and Hebraiser." P. 70. "There is something of a mystic quality in almost every writing of the New Testament." P. 95. The Old Testament with its rites and ceremonies had, in his view, the same design and use as the painted scenes in a theatre. Its sacrifices were not types of Christ; but in order to get "new types of words" into the minds of men for some purpose to be unfolded in the Christian era, it was necessary, he says, "to prepare them by an artificial process." "This is done in and through the sacrificial system of the Old Testament." P. 103. Thus the Mosaic ritual is a contrivance, or stage effect, to help out a performance; but there was not an iota of substantial meaning in the whole ceremonial law. It was contrived just to create some "bases of words," "to represent, or adequately to convey" "the grace of Christ." P. 103. No proof is offered, no argument attempted. It is as though one should say, that the theory of the circulation of the blood was started by Harvey and his friends, to furnish terms in speaking of the alimentary and nervous systems!

As to the Gospel of John, which seems doomed to furnish mystics with a warm soil for their larvæ, he says: "It is the most contradictory book in the world, one of which logic can make just what havoc it will," and then he prescribes "the only way of reading it." The book which young cottagers and dairymen's daughters read with peculiar avidity and ease, needs, he thinks, a clue to help us thread its solemn labyrinthian mysteries, its whispering, spell-breathing recesses. Adopting his views of inspiration, the Bible becomes some such a book as the mind of Göthe could have produced; and is to be read with feelings similar in kind to those which Dr. Bushnell quotes with approbation as characteristic of that writer, in the following passage: "What Göthe says of himself, is true of all efficient writers: 'I have always regarded all I have done, as solely symbolical, and, at bottom, it does not signify whether I make pots or dishes.'" P. 67. There are some who are pleased with this transcendental balderdash; they pretend to see a fine meaning in it; cloud-land obscurities and tinted shapes of illusory ideas float before their minds; and with oracular and mystical signs, they tell us, as this

Digitized by Google

author somewhere says, that "the roots of the known are in the unknown." The Bible does not escape in this transcendental, "prismy" method of showing off truths; for the author tells us: "There is no book in the world that contains so many repugnances, or antagonistic forms of assertion, as the Bible." In all his handling of it, he seems to feel like one who is shewing a dying dolphin, or lecturing analytically on the last notes of a swan. The Bible with him is a very curious book, to appreciate which it requires a peculiar order of mind, somewhat mystical, free from logic, and delighting in antagonisms. He shews an affected familiarity with the mental philosophy of inspiration which fills us with mingled pain and disgust.

Reserving for another place some incidental remarks of the same general nature with the foregoing, we proceed to analyze the book, setting forth its doctrinal contents under several heads.

I. This author adopts much of the phraseology, though, we would hope, not the precise doctrines of Pantheism.

His theory relative to the divine existence is this: God, considered as the absolute Being, has the power of self-manifestation, of producing or representing himself in finite forms, which power is called the Logos, or Word, or Son of God; and hence from everlasting there was a possibility of a threefold, or manifold, self-expression. What we commonly call creation was a revelation of God, the first result of this power of mirroring himself to his own understanding, and to the understanding of finite beings.

By a farther exercise of the Logos, God revealed himself in human form, in the person of Jesus Christ; and thus came, more eminently than before, into connection with our race. "There results, at one and the same time, a double impersonation, that of the Father and that of the Son, — one because of the other, and both correspondent or relative terms. As Christ himself appears in the finite, he calls out into the finite with him, if I may so speak, another representative of the Absolute, one that is conceived to reside in the heavens, as he himself is seen to walk upon the earth." P. 169. We are to realize what God is, "by setting ourselves before this personal history of the Father in heaven, and the Son on earth, both as representatives standing out before the Absolute Being, watching the relative history they unfold in finite forms, their acting and interacting, and discovering what is expressed thereby." P. 170. But there is also a development

Digitized by Google

of God as the Divine power, operating in man, to sanctify him, and this is called the Holy Spirit.

Here then is Dr. B.'s trinity, consisting of three emanations from the Absolute, or three impersonations; which, however, are three only in our apprehension. Neither of them, singly, nor all conjointly, are God. The Father is no less a mere impersonation than Christ, or the Spirit; for they all exist under finite conditions, and simply as actors in a drama, representing Jehovah, and personating the Absolute, who alone is God, and, in every sense, is one. Naturally, therefore, does our author pronounce the life and death of Jesus Christ to be "the highest and most moving tragedy ever acted in this mortal sphere; a tragedy distinguished in the fact that God is the Chief Character, and the divine feeling, moved in tragic earnest — Goodness Infinite manifested through Sorrow — the passion represented." P. 205. It appears, then, that what believers in all ages have been accustomed to regard as the most sublime verities of our holy religion, are but illusions. We have a scenic trinity, and a scenic atonement. How do we know that the salvation hoped for will be any thing more real?

We need not inform our readers, that the fundamental idea in this dogma differs so little from Sabellianism, notwithstanding a disclaimer on this point, as to leave no very wide scope for choice.

But when we come to the general mode of divine manifestation, as set forth in this book, we find that which is more objectionable than Sabellianism. Its complexion is pantheistic. Dr. B., we would presume, is not fully aware of his own tendencies, or of the extent to which his conceptions have taken a coloring from that seductive system; but the mien and dialect of the pantheists he has evidently adopted. We are the less surprised at this, from the circumstance that Schleiermacher, who seems to be Dr. B.'s oracle, could pronounce an extravagant encomium upon Benedict Spinoza, that apostle of European pantheism, declaring him to be a man "full of religion, and full of the Holy Ghost." And when we listen to Dr. B.'s declarations, that God will "live Himself into the acquaintance and biographic history of the world;" (P. 147.) that "He comes into the human itself, and melts into the history of man, through agonies, sorrows, and tears;" (P. 180.) that "the historic Christ fills them with God as a higher sense; the divinity in him floods their feeling, and

Digitized by Google

they receive God as a power, before they conceive his philosophic idea;" (P. 211.) and that "history is nothing but an evolution or expression of God and man in their own nature and character;" (P. 75.) we forgot for a moment that we were not in a German lecture-room, taking notes to the effect, that "God is the ever streaming immanence of Spirit in matter," who "has no reality only so far as he unites himself to finite spirits, or manifests himself in them."

When we saw our hierophant vaulting into the clouds, yea, inconceivably beyond the clouds, beyond and before all creation, and saying of God, (P. 146.) "Conceive him now in creating the worlds,—creating worlds, if you please, from eternity;"—and "in so doing, he only represents, expresses, or outwardly proves himself;" with other passages of the same kind; we queried whether Fichte's theory was not re-produced. Much of Dr. B.'s language reminds us of the following from Fichte: "God is that being which evolved itself out of a principle or ground of existence found in God himself,—out of a nature of God,—or out of a principle, which is indeed not intelligent, not moral, not perfect in itself; but which, nevertheless, contains in embryo, and locked up within itself, intelligence, morality, and perfection; which however, are only potential, only impliedly intelligent, and moral and perfect;—by means of a series of creations, self-manifestations of God, by which nature was exalted, and spiritualized, until it evolved itself into the most perfect personal being,—God explicit; God in the eminent sense; or God in the absolute identity of the ideal and the real; evolving itself from the original absolute confusion of the ideal and real. This absolute confusion, the real ground itself, is neither ideal nor real; yet divides itself into two equally eternal principles of the ideal and real; and out of the combination of both, (by means of the subordination of the real to the ideal, by the transmutation of the real into the ideal,) arises absolute identity, that is, *God!*" We could appreciate the author's remark, already quoted: "In His own Absolute nature, God is a being so vast, that when I drew out the conception of Him, as existing in Himself, I presume it was somewhat painful to you, so remote was it from all your own personal modes of being and life, as a finite creature." Before that, upon an opportunity given to take breath, we had inwardly thanked him, when he said: "Having now

Digitized by Google

come down hither, as it were, upon the shore of the Absolute — that Absolute which has no shore, — let us pause just here, a moment, and take note distinctly, of two or three matters that will assist us to open what remains of our subject with a better intelligence." P. 139.

From Fichte, our thoughts were transferred, in reading this book, to the banks of the Ganges. "The One must appear in the manifold; the Absolute in the conditional; Spirit in form; the Motionless in motion; the Infinite in the finite. He must distribute Himself; He must let forth His nature in sounds, colors, forms, works, definite objects and signs. It must be to us as if Brama were waking up; as if Jehovah, the Infinite I am, the Absolute, were dividing off Himself into innumerable activities, that shall dramatize His immensity, and bring Him within the molds of language and discursive thought." Pp. 139, 140. "Each," — that is, of the impersonations, or *avatars*; — "each and all together dramatize and bring forth into life about us that Infinite One, who, to our mere thought, were no better than Brama sleeping on eternity and the stars." P. 173. "The worlds created are all outgoings from Himself, and in that view, revealments of Him." P. 137. In creating them, "He only represents expresses, or outwardly produces Himself." P. 146. Here is a mitigated Brahmanism. If we have read correctly the emanation-system, as found in the sacred books of the Hindoos, it is this; The impersonal essence called *Brahm* is absolutely one, yet in himself he is devoid of attributes, and is conceived of as from everlasting perfectly quiescent; but having a power of self-expression, he at length awakes and manifests the universe. The mode of manifestation more generally received is as follows: Brahm, the eternal fountain of existence, by his own energy, — Dr. B.'s Logos, — separates from his own substance a vast number of spirits, destined to occupy forms celestial, terrestrial, etc. By the same energy he sends forth a subtile emanation, or rather extends a portion of his substance into a new form of being, that into another, and so on in successive evolutions. As the rice is in the husk before it is hulled, as oil is in the olive before it is pressed, so does the universe come from the absolute. So far as we understand it, Dr. B.'s theory is something like this.

We are frequently in the progress of the work, reminded of a desideratum alluded to in the Preliminary Dissertation: "There

Digitized by Google

wants to be a larger digestion, so to speak, of forms in the teacher of theology or mental philosophy." These discourses indicate, we think, an unrivalled gastric energy. Indeed, the avowal is made expressly: "So far from suffering even the least consciousness of constraint, or oppression, under any creed, I have been readier to accept as great a number as fell in my way." P. 82. "Behold he drinketh up a river, and hasteth not; he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth." The next page contains the following: "If, however, creeds of theory, or systematic dogma, must be retained, the next best arrangement would be to allow assent to a great number of such creeds at once; letting them qualify, assist, and mitigate each other." This recipe recalls the prescription which a lunatic of our former acquaintance made for himself, while under the care of a private physician. Rising in the night, he went to the doctor's office, and compounded a dose, by taking indiscriminately a few grains of all the medicines at hand. The next morning his insanity was gone; but he lay at the point of death.

Dr. B.'s avowed hope and aim is a re-union of the churches of New England, which have been sundered by Unitarianism; but his attempts to introduce harmony by a transcendental analysis, are no more successful than would be an attempt to harmonize light and darkness. In doing away with some of the apparent difficulties of our holy religion, he gets rid of religion itself, in its revealed, evangelical form. The same process of solution and eclecticism only needs to be carried out, to convert every church edifice into a pantheon. The last twelve-month, among its many strange productions, gave birth to just such a plan. The pantheists of Paris, it is said, proposed to convert the Pantheon to a purpose that should answer literally to its name. An artist, by the name of Chenavard, was employed by Ledru Rollin to sketch a plan expressive of their object. The following is an extract: "Men of all nations, and of all ages, may enter that Temple, and find there the objects of their worship: The Chaldean, his Star; the Egyptian, his Osiris, Isis, and Typhon; the Indian, his Brama, with all his Avaters; the Hebrew, JEHOVAH; the Persian, Ormuzd, and Ahriman; the Greek and Roman, their Olympus, with its full complement of gods; the Christian, his CHRIST eighteen times glorified; the northern barbarian, his gods, shivering beneath polar snows; the Mohammedan, who hates images,

Digitized by Google

his prophet, with his face veiled by a flame; the Druse, his calif Hakem, with his azure eyes and his lion-mask. Every one will be able to say his prayers in that universal church, the true metropolis of the human race."

II. We proceed to consider the subject of the Divinity of Christ, discussed in the same Discourse.

This Discourse is founded, as are the other two, on the following text: "For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." I. John, i. 2.

Bucholtzer remarks, that "a preacher is known by his peroration." If he have any power of application, if he be not a mere essayist, it will appear when he comes to close up his discourse. It may be said with equal truth, that a divine is known by the exordium to his discourse. The way in which he explains his text, and unfolds his subject, shews us both his correctness and his compass as a theologian.

Judging by this rule, what shall we say of the divine whose Discourse is now before us? For his exposition of the text, we think, is false; and the doctrine which he deduces from it finds no support in the plain and obvious meaning of the passage. In transcendental style he prints the word *life* with a capital initial: "the Life." But not to quarrel with this symptomatic incident, the second sentence of the discourse makes an incorrect statement as to the meaning of the text. He says: "It declares that Christ was a manifestation of the Life of God." Now we maintain that the text asserts no such thing, yet the whole Discourse is based upon this assumption. For he says, "In this view, my whole discourse will only be a development of the text."

We deny that when John speaks, in the text, of *the life*, he means the Life of God, any more than when speaking of *the bread* which came down from heaven, he means the Bread of God; that is, not the bread which God sends to the world, but that which under the symbol of "Bread," is the eternal and sustaining source of the divine existence. *The life* is used to designate one or something which "was *with* the Father," called in the preceding verse *the Word of life*. Now it was this Word, it was this something called *the life* which was with the Father, which is manifested, — but not the Life of God. The author proceeds in the Discourse to shew us how the interior Life of God has been manifested to

Digitized by Google

men. He has no countenance from the text in his transcendental effort. Platonic as the fisherman of Galilee is represented to be, esoteric as our German mystics describe him, he never ventures in the use of symbolic language beyond a plain and simple terminology. Vine, Bread, Shepherd, Door, Way, Truth, Life, etc., describe the circle of his metaphysical forms. Such an idea as the manifestation of the Life of God never seems to have presented itself to him in his midnight musings on the Sea of Gennesareth, where Tholuck thinks the sensibilities of his contemplative spirit were quickened. But John was not a transcendentalist. "The Life of God manifested," in Dr. Bushnell's sense, would have been as unintelligible to his simple spirit as it is to our New England common sense. Had John said, — referring to the Saviour's words, "I am the resurrection and the Life," — "For the resurrection was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you the resurrection which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," — who would have said from these words that the Resurrection of God was manifested? The author has converted the text to his transcendental and mystic use without authority from the rules of interpretation.

As we proceed to the exposition of the author's views, in this and the following Discourses, we bear in mind his warning in the introductory essay on Language, that we cannot be certain as to the ideas conveyed by his words. For he says: "Words, as we have seen, never carry, or transfer a thought; they only offer hints or symbols, to put others on generating the same thought, which, in many cases they are not likely to do, unless they have been long enough practised in the subject discussed, to know where it lies." P. 86. Much to the same effect occurs throughout the essay. We are surprised, as we have already said, that Dr. B. should have taken the trouble to write a book, when there is such small chance of its being understood. But he wrote the essay, after he had conceived and uttered his erroneous views on the Trinity and Atonement; and we now regard that essay in connection with them, as a range of hydrants prepared by the author to play on those who attempt to set on fire his wood, hay, and stubble. He will find, in his emergency, that his cisterns are broken.

The author of these discourses rejects the proper Humanity of Christ. In other words, he does not believe that Christ was a

Digitized by Google

human being. This appears in the following passages. He is answering the common proofs that Christ had a human soul:

"But this divine person, the Christ, grows, I shall be reminded, or is said to grow in wisdom and knowledge. There must, therefore, be some kind of intelligence in him, call it human or divine, which is under a law of development, and therefore of limitation. To this I answer (1.) that the language may well enough be taken as language of external description merely, or as only setting forth appearance as appearance; or (2.) it may be said, which is far more satisfactory, and leaves the question where it should be, that the body of Christ evidently grew up from infancy; and that all his actings grew out, so to speak, with it." P. 152. "Christ himself declared, not that a human soul, hid in his person, was placed under limitations, but more — that the Son, that is, the divine person — for the word *Son* is used as relative to the Father — the Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do." P. 154. "Besides, this theory of two distinct subsistences, still maintaining their several kinds of action in Christ, — one growing, learning, obeying, suffering; the other infinite and impassible — only creates difficulties a hundred fold greater than it solves." P. 154.

The writer, then, believes that Christ is God in a human body, manifesting himself through it without the instrumentality of a human soul in that body. At times we have thought that he might say that he does not, in so many words, deny the doctrine of the human soul in Christ; but that he only tries to make it appear ridiculous.

We need not inform our readers that this notion, that Christ had no human soul, is contrary to the received opinion of the Christian world. Shall we proceed to prove that Jesus Christ is really and truly a man, "with a true body and reasonable soul"? Had this been disproved in the work before us, it would be appropriate to consider the foundation of the received opinion on this subject. But without entering into the subject fully, we may observe, that the notion advanced by this author is obviously absurd. Who was it that said in Gethsemane: "Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done"? Or who, on the cross, cried out: "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And to whom were these appeals addressed? Dr. Bushnell ridicules the idea of two conscious minds, human and divine, in the person of Christ, on account of the confusion which there seems to be in supposing the human nature to pray, while the divine nature is listening, but no more aiding in the

Digitized by Google

prayer, than though the two natures were separated by the distance from us of the planet "Saturn." P. 154. Our readers will recognize in this the old Unitarian cavil against the Trinitarian doctrine of two natures in Christ. But Dr. B.'s notion leads to an absurdity, which is capable of far greater ridicule than he, or his Unitarian friends, can ever bestow on the doctrine of the two natures in Christ. According to him, God is in Christ without a human soul. We ask again, who is it that prays: "Father, let this cup pass from me?" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Evidently, it is God praying to himself. The body of Christ is not like Memnon's statue, made vocal by the sunbeams. If Christ had no human nature, soul and body, how could he pray? How could he say: "My Father is greater than I"?

The beauty and usefulness of the incarnation in its relation to men is wholly destroyed by this theory. We have no man Christ Jesus for an example. We have no "elder brother." Christ, with his body inhabited solely by Deity, is only a theophany, or Divine appearance. The burning bush, the pillar of cloud and fire, may almost as well be our example as Dr. Bushnell's Christ.

When he tells us that God acts the man in Christ, we feel that acting is not suited to the exigencies of our condition. We suppose that the man Christ Jesus was intended to be a sinless pattern for us, helping our efforts to be like him through the assurance given us, that it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren; and that for this reason, he is able to succor them that are tempted, having been tempted himself in all points as we are, yet without sin. To say that God was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin, and to hold this up as an encouragement to resist temptation, is mockery. Yet this is the legitimate consequence of our author's notion.

We need not say that this theory of his would make sad havoc with all those sacred and delightful associations which Christians have with the human nature of their Saviour as joined to the Divine. The man Christ Jesus, "the first born among many brethren," the man of sorrows, tempted, smitten of God, and afflicted, — dying, rising, ascending, reigning, coming to judge the world, leading his flock to living fountains of waters, is taken away from their faith and affections. Instead of him they are commended to a divine *nimbus*, Deity *clouded* in flesh;

Digitized by Google

the poor, perishable part of humanity galvanized into unnatural life by indwelling omnipotence. We have thought of Mary at the sepulchre, in connection with this dreadful substitution of an inconceivable something for Jesus, the man of Calvary, dying and rising again. Mary had far less to complain of at the supposed removal of Jesus from the tomb, than we, her fellow disciples have, if this writer's notion be true. Her Saviour was still a reality to her; but in a more deplorable sense may we say of Dr. B.: "He has taken away our Lord, and we know not where he has laid him."

We may suppose the Christian saying to himself, Then it seems that all my thoughts about Christ have been mistaken. That blending of human and Divine in him, which makes me love him as my friend while I trust him as my God, that mixed affection, so inconceivable to a Unitarian, but the richest experience of all evangelical believers, it seems, is a delusion. I look on Christ, after reading Dr. Bushnell's book, and I see only a body moved by some awful power which I cannot comprehend. His eyes look at me, but they are not human eyes. Human eyes are the windows of a human soul, like mine. Christ, it seems, has no human soul. Deity smiles at me through those eyes, but this frightens me. Deity speaks with the voice of a man. This is preternatural. The whole exhibition makes me feel somewhat as a child feels, when he first sees Maelzel's chess-player. There is a frightful intelligence about it; and so there is to me in that living corpse, that disintegrated man, the soul driven out, and the form taken possession of by Deity. Can God attract me to himself by such an exhibition? Alas! this is contrary to my natural sympathies. It behooves the true Christ "to be made like unto his brethren."

Then it would seem, — the Christian continues, — that my greatest comfort in thinking of death is also a delusion. Christ did not die, as I must. Deity left the body on the cross, but this is not parallel to the dissolution of soul and body in me. True, according to Dr. Bushnell, Deity cried out, acting the part of a sufferer, to produce an effect, to make a manifestation; but I cannot be thus imposed upon. It is not a cry of human distress. I love to feel that my Redeemer had a sensitive human spirit, like mine; — one which instinctively shrunk from pain and death; but which, for the joy set before it, endured the

Digitized by Google

cross. His triumph over death has always encouraged me at the thought of meeting the last enemy. I have always supposed, that, when I shall pray: "Lord Jesus receive my spirit!" the resemblance between the Saviour's experience of death and mine would qualify him to help me, and would encourage me thus to pray. But if this book be true, I shall have to become an Israelite, and "wait for the consolation of Israel." Isaiah makes me feel that Messiah is to be a man like me. I trusted that this Christ were he that should have redeemed Israel. I cannot even join in the message which John sent to Christ from prison: "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" If this book is true, I look for another.

All my adoring thoughts, — the Christian says, — of the man Christ Jesus on the throne of judgment, are, by this book, rebuked and scattered. I have always cherished the expectation, that when he should appear, I should be like him; that the identity of nature in the Judge and his saints would constitute a source of joy, nay, rapture not to be expressed; and that by this identity we as the redeemed are to be distinguished forever in the universe, to the intent that unto principalities and powers may be known by us the manifold wisdom of God. But this, if Dr. Bushnell be right, is without foundation. That expression, "the man Christ Jesus," is false. There is no such "man" in our author's scheme.

This leads us to speak here of a difficulty which our author finds in his own theory. He is puzzled to explain the scriptural account of the termination of the mediatorial reign. "When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him." He says: "I will not go into a discussion of these very remarkable words; for I do not care to open God's secrets before the time." P. 177. But the plea of modesty will hardly avail the man who has by searching found out God, who has found out the Almighty unto perfection, and who proposes a new Christian theory which is to reconcile all things on earth, and to change the faith of the entire Christian world. The excuse of modesty is not acceptable from such a man. How the Son can hereafter be any more subject to Him that did put all things under him, than he is now, being a mere helpless irresponsible body animated by Deity, is a question which may well be indefinitely postponed.

Digitized by Google

But what disposal, then, does Dr. B. make of the Word who was in the beginning with God, and who was God. The received theory of the Christian church, is, that the Word, the second person in the Godhead, became flesh, and dwelt among us. What is Dr. B.'s view on this point?

We are expressly told by him, and in language which even his Introductory Dissertation cannot draw into doubt, that there is no such personal or metaphysical distinction in the Godhead as Christian believers suppose is indicated by the term *Word*. That Word is explained away:

"There is in God, taken as the Absolute Being, a capacity of self-expression, so to speak, which is peculiar — a generative power of form, a creative imagination, in which, or by aid of which, He can produce Himself outwardly, or represent Himself in the finite. In this respect, God is wholly unlike to us. Our imagination is passive, stored with forms, colors and types of words from without, borrowed from the world we live in. But all such forms, God has in Himself, and this is the Logos, the Word, elsewhere called the Form of God. Now this Word, this Form of God, in which He sees Himself, is with God, as John says, from the beginning. It is God mirrored before His own understanding, and to be mirrored, as in fragments of the mirror, before us. Conceive Him now as creating the worlds, or creating worlds, if you please, from eternity. In so doing, He only represents, expresses, or outwardly produces Himself. He bodies out His own thoughts. What we call the creation, is, in another view, a revelation only of God, His first revelation." Pp. 145, 146.

The passage reminds us strongly of some of Edward Irving's speculations on the gift of tongues. That a man in his right mind should repeat such a passage as the one now quoted, in the presence of hundreds of ministers, and afterwards print it in a volume, is a fact which his friends may hereafter ponder. Was he intoxicated by the fumes of intellectual self-conceit? He has arrived at a knowledge of the Most High which distances every inspired writer. All that John, even the "mystic" John, dared to say, was: "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." But here is a wonderful man. Where could he have been when the Most High laid the foundations of the earth? We shall expect still more remarkable disclosures from this seer. "Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? Or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" The analysis of the divine mind presented in the foregoing quotation indicates a condition of his own mind which gives occasion to

Digitized by Google

thoughtfulness. Yet who can refrain from a smile at the profound exegetical remark in this paragraph, that this power of representing Himself "is with God from the beginning!" This is most undoubtedly correct; and what a perfect solution of that mysterious passage, John i. 1: "the Word was with God!" We have all been too Platonic in interpreting John, looking for deeper meaning in his words than is meet, for now it appears that all which John meant in this passage is, that God has a power of expressing himself, and that this power was with God from the beginning. Able minister of the New Testament, who has power to reveal such mysteries!

God having "inworlded" himself, as our author expressed it when he delivered the discourse at New Haven, afterwards incarnated himself, and in about the same way. Stars and suns, trees and flowers, the whole material creation, were one suitable manifestation of God. There yet remained another, namely, by means of the human person, which sin had defaced. "God will reclaim this last type of Himself, possess it with His own life and feeling, and through that, live Himself into the acquaintance and biographic history of the world. And the Word was made flesh," — that is, God, in the exercise of his power of expressing himself, went into a human body, devoid of soul. P. 147.

Here is the resolution of the whole mystery of the second person in the Trinity, and of the incarnation. As we have already shewn, the human soul is rejected from partnership in the manifestation, and God is in Christ precisely like a Dryad in its tree.

The author of this book discards the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. He feels it important, however, to make out a Trinity; and a curious Trinity indeed has he invented. To deal seriously with it, or with much effort, would be like spearing an Ossianic shade. Continuing from the passage last quoted, he says:

"Prior to this moment, there has been no appearance of trinity in the revelations God has made of His being; but just here, whether as resulting from the incarnation or implied in it, we are not informed, a threefold personality or impersonation of God begins to offer itself to view." P. 148.

Which, being interpreted, seems to be this: There had never been any thing which indicated that God would manifest or imper-

Digitized by Google

sonate himself in just three ways, till he entered a human body; at which time, some indications are made, that God's impersonations will, in all, be three.

Why Dr. B. should limit the number to three, "we are not informed." But a belief in the Trinity being essential to membership in the Christian Church, and being also a good distinction from Brahminism and Pantheism, it is well for Dr. B. to restrict his divine impersonations to that number. But the manner in which he makes out his Trinity shews that there is nothing in his view, in the nature of the Godhead, which gives occasion to such manifestation. This brings us to his dogma respecting the Holy Spirit; and although we confess ourselves quite sick of his wanton liberty with sacred things, yet it seems necessary to follow him a little farther.

God has already manifested himself in "character, feeling, and truth." "But," the author says, "we want, also, to conceive of Him as in *act* within us, [the italics are his,] working in us, under the conditions of time and progression, spiritual results of quickening, deliverance, and purification from evil." "God, in act, therefore, will be given us by another finite, relative impersonation." P. 171.

Now comes forth the third person in Dr. B.'s Trinity. We have had God projected in the heavens under the name of Father, at the time when the incarnation took place; — the Father and this incarnation being the first and second persons in the Godhead. Now we are to have a third person, which is to be God in spiritual "act."

"Accordingly," the author says, "the natural image *spirit*, that is, breath, is taken up and clothed with a personal activity." P. 171. "Now the Absolute Being becomes a Vital Presence." P. 172. "Thus we have three persons, or impersonations, all existing under finite conditions or conceptions." P. 173.

Who, then, we would ask here, was the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob? Not the Father, for he was not projected, called out of the Absolute, till the incarnation; as Dr. B. informs us in these words: "As Christ himself appears in the finite, he calls out into the finite with him, if I may so speak, another representative of the Absolute, one that is conceived to reside in the heavens, as he himself is seen to walk upon the earth." P. 169. The God of the patriarchs, then, could not have been

Digitized by Google

the Father.* Nor could it have been the Son, because he had no existence till the Logos, or the power to body forth God, produced him at the incarnation. It could not have been the Spirit, for he was projected just at the time of the incarnation. P. 173. Nor could it have been the "Absolute;" for the Absolute, in the nature of things, does not act. He is "Brama, sleeping on eternity and the stars." P. 173. Who then, we repeat it, is the God who has "been our dwelling-place in all generations?" But to return to Dr. B.'s third person in the Trinity. The eternal spirit, according to him, is nothing but a way in which God "acts," a way adopted by him just about Anno Mundi 4004, or near his manifestation in the body. The conception of a divine personality, or impersonation, called the Holy Spirit, was "till then, unknown." "When David prays, Take not thy Holy Spirit from me, we may imagine otherwise," quoth Dr. B.; "but I think, without any sufficient reason." P. 172.

Thus we have the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, taken from us, which is, however, done more deliberately in the last sentence of the following passage, where the author allows us to apply the word *persons* to the "Three of Scripture," while he rejects that distinction in the Godhead which alone lays any foundation for it. He says:

"Neither is it any so great wisdom, as many theologians appear to fancy, to object to the word *person;* for, if any thing is clear, it is that the Three of Scripture do appear under the grammatic forms which are appropriate to person — I, Thou, He, We, and They; and, if it be so, I really do not perceive the very great licence taken by our theology, when they are called three persons. Besides, we practically need, for our own sake, to set them out as three persons before us, acting relatively toward each other, in order to ascend into the liveliest, fullest realization of God. We only need to abstain from assigning to these divine persons an interior, metaphysical nature, which we are nowise able to investigate, or which we may positively know to contradict the unity of God." Pp. 174, 175.

Now this "interior, metaphysical nature" is the gist of the whole subject; and we are thus informed that this author believes in no such nature in God.

* "There is in fact, no real and proper development of the Father, which is older than Christianity, and here the designation is developed in connection with the Son and Holy Spirit as a threefold denomination of God." P. 167.

Digitized by Google

What then does he believe? Here we come to a passage which is, on the whole, as worthy of reprehension as any in the book:

"Do you ask then, whether I mean simply to assert a modal trinity, or three modal persons? — I must answer obscurely, just as I answered in regard to the humanity of Christ." P. 175.

"I must answer obscurely!" Up to the moment of reading that passage, we had suffered ourselves to be carried along by the writer, sympathizing with him in some degree, and hoping that we might find him groping his way forth from shadows and labyrinths into the daylight of truth. But on reading his answer to the question, "Do you believe in a mere modal Trinity, or that the trinity is merely a threefold mode of God manifesting himself?" and on hearing him say: "I must answer obscurely," a feeling arose which led us to the point of closing the book. We felt like asking, Is this man sincere? Is he toying with these sacred themes? and have we been trifled with, all this while?

We cannot think that he is purposely dishonest, and trying to act a double part. But we think that we can explain the process by which he was betrayed into this appearance of insincerity and management. He was invited to speak before the Divinity School at Cambridge. The idea seems to have possessed his mind, that he was raised up to recover Unitarians from their errors; a work for which he appeared to himself in a measure qualified, as he says, "by the profound sympathy, and the real respect, I have always felt for the Unitarians, a sympathy and respect grounded, I will add, in a participation of similar difficulties." He, moreover, was endued with courage suited to the work, because he did not "feel the extreme horror of their persons sometimes manifested." Proceeding to Cambridge, he sacrifices the Atonement, as will soon appear, at the shrine of union. He thinks that his old difficulties with the way of salvation as commonly understood, which he had felt "ever since" his "entrance into the ministry," P. 101, would conciliate a fellow feeling; and as he was in good standing in the Orthodox denomination, he was persuaded that he could bridge the gulf between us and Unitarianism. He set forth the Orthodox view of the atonement in a light which convinces his Unitarian hearers that he is not a Calvinist. With some frank strictures upon their views, he offers them a way of salvation which they

Digitized by Google

can adopt with infinitely less of sacrifice than the Orthodox would be compelled to make in adopting it. The offer seemed liberal; and he appeared to think that he should succeed in his diplomacy. "For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them; but they understood not."

He finds it necessary to adjust the doctrine of the Trinity to the Unitarian apprehension, and this he does at New Haven. But there he meets with some who question with him, not being prepared to commit all that is precious in divine truth to his negotiation. They demand of him: "Do you mean to assert a modal Trinity?" He appears to be troubled with so plain a question. He wishes that men would not be so dogmatic; and therefore he resolves to occupy his third discourse at Andover with an invective against being so definite in theology. But they press him, at New Haven, for an answer. "Do you mean to assert a modal Trinity?" He seems embarrassed; he blushes; he is like a reluctant witness under a cross-examination. He says at last, in a deprecatory tone: "I must answer obscurely." If he answers affirmatively, the Orthodox will renounce him; if he says No, he is disqualified to act upon the Unitarians. He takes his turn in "dramatizing." He has a part to perform, and it is done thus. In certain passages he distinctly teaches that the Trinity is merely modal. For example, he denies any original triad in the divine nature. P. 179. He also declares that the persons are three *simply* as related to our finite apprehension. "Speaking in a way more positive, they are instrumentally three, three simply as related to our finite apprehension, and the communication of God's incommunicable nature." P. 177. In this there is no obscurity. If it stood by itself it would be an unambiguous declaration of a merely modal trinity.

But in addition to these, another class of passages is introduced, the sole effect of which is to obscure this definite statement, and to relieve him from the responsibility of maintaining it. On P. 175, he says that there may be more in the three persons than what he has declared to be the whole; and, finally, that we must not intrude upon their interior nature, either by assertion or denial; and this, although he himself has both asserted and denied.

Thus Dr. B. has in fact answered obscurely, and yet the obscuring passages are no consistent part of his theory. It is perfectly plain that he is no Trinitarian. In his opinion, God is

Digitized by Google

not three in any sense connected with his original being. This he distinctly declares to be his conviction. Now it is of small consequence whether he represents God as making three, or thirty-three, manifestations of himself. That which distinguishes a Trinitarian from a Unitarian is this: A belief in an original three-foldness in the nature of God. This our author denies. He is therefore one with the Unitarians; differing from them, however, in forming the several ways in which God has manifested himself, into an association which he calls a Trinity.

Now that we are on the subject of Dr. B.'s relation to Unitarians, we may as well allude to one topic, which, on some accounts, would more appropriately be noticed hereafter. In one part of his book, he seems to think that it was "unparalleled liberality" in them to invite him to discourse before their theological school. We think he is mistaken. Unitarians, and all men in dangerous error, have a quick sympathy with one reputed Orthodox who, they perceive, is beginning to pale his light. Mr. Belsham once wrote to a leading Unitarian in Boston: "I hear that Mr. Jefferson is an unbeliever. If so, he cannot be far from us." This tells a great secret. Any defection from orthodoxy is to men in error a source of great comfort. They have a keen perception of the least appearance of it, — a certain skill in the diagnosis of this spiritual disease.

Dr. Bushnell's interpretation of providence, at his being invited to Cambridge just when his mind had become fixed in his theory, is a mournful but instructive illustration of the delusions which men may practise on themselves by undertaking to interpret providence. He says to the Theological School at Cambridge: "When your letter was laid upon my table, I was at that moment engaged in projecting a discourse," which was "forthwith set apart," with "the text chosen at the time referred to," for the occasion at Cambridge. Pp. 185–187. When Jonah fled from the presence of the Lord, and went to Joppa with a view of going to Tarshish, it must have struck him as a remarkable coincidence, and perhaps as a tacit approbation of providence, that there should be a ship on the point of sailing for that port. Dr. B.'s invitation from Cambridge, which arrived just as he had chosen his text for a discourse against the received view of the Christian atonement, appears to have affected his mind in about the same way. But Jonah lived to pen this instructive admo-

Digitized by Google

nition: "They that regard lying vanities forsake their own mercies."

III. Dr. Bushnell rejects the Christian doctrine of vicarious Atonement.

The remarks which we propose to offer on the discourse delivered at Cambridge, will be confined chiefly to principles. To follow its author through all his marches and countermarches, assertions and contradictions, would require a volume. Nor is extended criticism necessary, as the prominent errors, diffused through this production, may be easily detected, and brought before the reader.

He labors to set aside the orthodox view of Christ and his work, under every form in which it has ever been held by the church of God.

He distributes the views of those who are accepted, now, as orthodox, into two classes: one, which exhibits the death of Christ as availing by force of what it *is*, the other by force of what it *expresses;* the former holding it as a literal substitution of evil endured, for evil that was to have been endured; the latter holding it as an expression of abhorrence at sin, made through the suffering of one, in place of the same expression that was to be made by the suffering of many. P. 195.

We do not perceive any necessity of separating these views. We believe that the sufferings and death of Christ procure pardon and salvation for sinners both by what they *are*, and by what they *express;* by the evil endured as a substitute for the penalty incurred by transgression; and by the manifestation of that abhorrence which a holy God feels towards sin; and that these sufferings were absolutely necessary, not only to make a moral impression upon the mind, but to render the pardon and justification of the guilty just and safe on the part of the Divine government.

And this, it appears to us, is the doctrine of the Scriptures. Numerous passages might be adduced to shew, that the great end for which Christ came into the world was not merely to bear witness to the truth, to "renovate character," and "to quicken by the infusion of the divine life," as Dr. B. maintains; but to *suffer*, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. In a word, that he came for the express purpose of suffering penal evil, in the place of, and as the substitute for, the sinner; and

Digitized by Google

being thus placed under the law, in order to redeem them that were under the law, he bore the curse of God which would otherwise have fallen upon us.

But this general view, in both its branches, after exhausting his rhetorical power in efforts to render it odious, and having reduced it, as he thinks, to a sheer absurdity as held by the great majority of the Orthodox, he finally dismisses as unworthy of a place in his system.

He, however, considers it a very remarkable fact, that this doctrine which is "repugnant, when speculatively regarded, to the most sacred instincts or sentiments of our moral nature," which "dissolves itself at the first approach of rational inquiry," which has been "refuted again and again, cast away, and trampled upon by irreverent mockeries," — "has never yet been able to die." And it was some comfort to be told, that in "a region separate from all speculation, or theologizing," into which he proposed to lead us, he would "virtually reclaim and restore it, in a shape that provokes none of the objections" which he had brought against it. But we are constrained to say, that though he keeps the word of promise to the ear, he breaks it to the hope; for, after all, it seems that we were not finally to be deprived of the "venerable doctrine" which has "supported the spirit of so many believers and martyrs, in so many trials and deaths, continued through so many centuries." P. 203. We ought, perhaps, to thank Dr. B. for his promised protection of this abused theory during its perilous journey through that unknown region where neither speculation nor theology can exist, — a region which we imagine must be like that described by Job, — "a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, where the light is as darkness." But we are sure that this doctrine, though "trampled upon by irreverent mockeries," and now wounded more deeply than ever in the house of its friends, will "never be able to die." It will survive this last and most cruel assault; and though it may never appear in a shape which will not provoke the objections of those who cannot endure the idea that Divine justice requires a sacrifice for the sins of the world, it will support the spirit of true believers in all coming time.

Dr. B.'s doctrine of the Atonement is in perfect harmony with his view of the person of Christ, which we have already given. It

Digitized by Google

is not that the Divine Word took upon him the nature of man that he might suffer and die in that nature as a sacrifice for sin; but that the life of God was manifested in Jesus Christ, to produce a "moral effect upon the mind of the race," — "to quicken the world in love and truth, and reunite it to Himself," — "to quicken by the infusion of the Divine life," — to be "a historic power and presence in the world's bosom, organizing there a new society or kingdom, called the kingdom of heaven, or sometimes the church," — a Presence which even atheists and idolaters must recognize and worship as Divine, and which "floods the feeling" of all mankind, so that they are compelled to receive God in this way as love and power, before they find him as the Absolute of the reason, or conceive his philosophic Idea. Pp. 188, 189, 209, 210, 211.

And the necessity of such a manifestation of the life of God arises, according to Dr. B., not from the fact that men, having voluntarily violated the Divine law, are exposed to its penal curse, and to the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; for there is no wrath or curse, as Dr. B. says, except what is naturally and necessarily generated by law in man's heart with respect to God; — (See Pp. 240, 141,) but from the fact, that "sin, being a withdrawal into self and self-hood, separates them from the life, and, as far as their own freedom is concerned, denies all influx of the Divine into their character and their religious nature," and thus passing "into a state of negation, as regards the Divine, all-sustaining life, they become imprisoned in darkness, unbelief, idolatry, and a general captivity to sense." Pp. 188, 189.

There is here nothing of that "exceeding *sinfulness* of sin," of which the apostle speaks in connection with redemption, — nothing of the transgression of the law as a contempt of God, a denial of his authority, and an injury to his government, — nothing of the holy indignation of God against all the workers of iniquity; — but merely a withdrawal from the light, and an imprisonment in self, — "a state of negation," as Dr. B. calls it, which seems to happen as naturally and necessarily to human souls in their development, as darkness covers the face of the earth when it turns away from the sun. And as it seems to involve no *guilt*, in the proper sense of the word, it needs only the powerful influence of love in the manifested life, to correct the aberration

Digitized by Google

of the mind; and to reunite it in holy fellowship with the God it has denied, only because he was unknown.

With such views of the end of Christ's mission, on the one hand, and of the nature of sin on the other, the idea of Atonement in any sense in which that word has ever been used by evangelical Christians, is absurd. There is here no Saviour, who is at once truly God and man, to make an atonement; and there is nothing in sin, as described in these pages, which calls for any interposition except the revelation of love to quicken the torpid sensibilities of mankind.

Accordingly, we entirely agree with Dr. B. in the confession which he makes at the outset, that "in offering such a statement, as the true doctrine of Christ and his work, he affirms nothing that is distinctively Orthodox;" and even seems "to rule out that view of Christ as a *sacrifice*, and *expiation for sin*, a *vicarious offering*, which, to the view of most Orthodox Christians, contains the real moment of his work as a Saviour." P. 189.

Looking as well as we can through the luminous vapors of our author's rhetoric, we consider the main sentiments of the discourse to be these:

1. A rejection of "that view of Christ as a *sacrifice*, an *expiation for sin*, a *vicarious offering*, which, to the view of most Orthodox Christians, contains the real moment of his work as a Saviour."

2. A substitution, instead of the foregoing, of the idea that Christ's work in redemption is chiefly upon or in the soul of man, regenerating and sanctifying him, by manifestation of the Divine life, and by other appropriate spiritual influences.

3. That for purposes of worship, to assist man's spiritual exercises, God has arranged certain moulds or forms of thought, or figures of speech, which express to the uneducated the prevailing doctrine of the atonement, but which really mean very little more than was stated above as to Christ's proper work in redemption.

4. That in preaching on the subject we should use chiefly the popular ritualistic language, and sometimes allow these altar-forms to have the effect of literal truth on our own minds.

Our author's objections to the common view of the atonement, are founded chiefly upon his own peculiar and objectionable statement of it. "On the whole," he says, "I know of no definite

Digitized by Google

and fixed point, on which the Orthodox view, so called, may be said to hang, unless it be this, viz., that Christ suffers evil as evil, or in direct and simple substitution for evil that was to be suffered by us; so that God accepts one evil in place of the other, and being satisfied in this manner, is able to justify or pardon." P. 194. The central idea of Orthodoxy respecting the atonement, according to Dr. Bushnell is, that Christ suffers *evil* as *evil*, because man having offended God, and deserved to suffer, as he elsewhere expresses it, "God will have his modicum of suffering somehow, — and if he lets the guilty go, will yet satisfy himself out of the innocent." P. 196. Accordingly we find our author, several times in the compass of a few pages, representing it as Orthodoxy, that in the agony of the garden, and the cross, the frown of God or divine justice literally rested on the Saviour's soul. In harmony with this idea, he adds: "I confess my inability to see how an innocent being could ever be set, even for one moment, in an attitude of displeasure under God. If He could lay His frown, for one moment, on the soul of innocence and virtue, He must be no such being as I have loved and worshipped." P. 199. And again: "If the frown of God lies upon his soul, as we often hear, in the garden and on the cross, how can the frown of God, falling on the soul of innocence, express any truth or any feeling of justice?" P. 200. In opposition to this, Dr. B. represents it as his own opinion, that God never loved his son more ardently than when he beheld him in the midst of his sufferings. This is the amount of our author's statement respecting the atonement as held by the Orthodox. If it contains an element of truth, it is truth in caricature. The inference naturally drawn from it is this; God is a vengeful being, and delights in the sufferings of those who disobey him; — and if for important reasons he is inclined to let the guilty go, he must appease his wrath, by taking vengeance on the innocent instead; — that when Christ became our Redeemer, God transferred his hatred of us, to our substitute, his Son; — and that in the garden and on the cross, our blessed Lord was literally crushed under his Almighty Father's displeasure upon him.

With regard to this statement, it should be remarked, that, so far as we know, the expression *evil as evil* is a phrase of this writer's invention, never employed by any theological writer on the atonement. Calvin, who seems to disturb our author so much,

Digitized by Google

(See Pp. 194, 196,) says: "We do not admit that God was ever hostile to him, (Christ,) or angry with him. For how could he be angry with his beloved Son 'in whom his soul delighted?' or how could Christ, by his intercession, appease the Father for others, if the Father were incensed against him? But we affirm that he sustained the weight of the divine severity; since being smitten and afflicted of God, he experienced from God all the tokens of wrath and vengeance."* God being supreme governor, and a just and holy God, was unquestionably displeased with the sinner, and could not consistently propose to him offers of pardon, even were this possible in the nature of things, without an expiating sacrifice. But instead of literally frowning upon his Son, we have always supposed, that he beheld him in the midst of his agonies, with unbounded love. Yes, and that the deep sympathies of the Godhead with Jesus in his sufferings added value beyond computation to the sacrifice. In contemplating the cross, we have often been sensible of a dark shadow of Divine displeasure. But never did we once suspect, that it was displeasure against an innocent substitute; but always that it was deserved displeasure against our guilty selves. Nor did we suppose that God's anger with us was vindictive anger, or unmixed with compassion; but that it is the infinite abhorrence of evil which belongs to the holiness of his nature, and to that sacred regard for justice, without which he would neither be qualified for the government of the universe, nor indeed be God.

But if we reject Dr. B.'s representations of Orthodoxy on this subject, what then, it may be inquired, is the true notion of atonement; the central idea on which all agree, and which constitutes the essence of the doctrine? It is, we repeat, that Christ suffered in substitution for us, as a sin-offering of infinite value, so that all the ends of moral government can be better answered by our salvation than by our condemnation, provided we believe in Christ.

Our author's farther objections to the atonement are just those respecting debt, substitution, etc., which the Unitarians formerly urged; which have been answered a hundred times; and which without an answer, would hardly make the slightest impression upon any intelligent Orthodox mind.

* Institutes, Book II. Chap. xvi. Sec. 11.

Digitized by Google.

With regard to the design of Christ's work, considered as to its subjective influence upon us or in us, we concede the position that its end is to produce reconciliation to God. This is the condition to which renewed minds ardently aspire. They strive to become like Christ; and when sufficiently enlightened and matured in holiness, they dread sin even more than its penal consequences. This state of feeling and action results, according to Christ's intention, from his life and work as Redeemer.

Nor do we deny that much is accomplished by the simple manifestation of God to man in human nature; nor, that the law is honored by the Saviour's obedience in the most trying circumstances, even unto terrible death. Such submission in such a being, is most tenderly affecting, and fitted to elevate our sense of duty, and inspire us with holy resolution to perform it.

But is this all? Are mere manifestations from without, and philosophies and subjectivities within, sufficient to redeem the soul? Dr. B. himself thinks that we need something more; only, according to him, as we shall shew, what we need may be a delusion instead of a reality. There must be a *seeming* justification, *appearing* to come from without, through the righteousness of Christ appropriated to us by faith. But this is for the uninitiated. What then is "the *true* idea of Christian justification?" What is the reality of that great doctrine which Paul so earnestly preached, which shook all Europe in the sixteenth century, and which lies at the foundation of the protestant Church? The necessity for it, as Dr. B. justly tells us, arises from "the fearful and self-accusing spirit of sin." "An indescribable dread of evil overhangs the human spirit." "Without any speculations about justification, mankind refuse to justify themselves. A kind of despair fills the heart of the race. They have no courage." "They sentence themselves to death." P. 213. How, then, shall we be able to find the "true idea of Christian justification?" to understand exactly what Paul meant when he said that we are "justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood?" And again: "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." What, then, is the idea of justification? Dr. B. undertakes to tell us.

Digitized by Google

"And here, now, if we desire to find it, is the true idea of Christian justification. We discover what it is by the want of it. Justification is that which will give confidence, again, to guilty minds; — that which will assure the base and humiliated soul of the world, chase away the demons of wrath and despair it has evoked, and help to return to God in courage, whispering still to itself — soul be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." P. 214.

That which will give confidence to guilty minds, — *that*, then, is justification. If I can by any means obtain a feeling of confidence that my sins are forgiven me, then I am justified. The Universalist who really believes that all will be saved, the idolater who has found relief to his fears by self-torment, the dying papist consoled by extreme unction, the proud pharisee thanking God that he is not as other men, and every self-righteous moralist who thinks that he needs no atonement, all having obtained confidence, are justified.

But how is this justification effected? Christ comes to us in the gentlest form and manner. "No storm wraps him about." He comes as "a brother to the guilty." "He calls the heavy laden to come unto him." "He lives confidence into the world." We come to him and embrace him, and thus "are practically justified." Pp. 214, 215. Then his death has its special efficacy in assuring the soul. How? We are invited to the spectacle,— we witness the awful prodigies, — we "hear the cry of the crucified — 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;' then regard the life that was manifested, dropping into cessation, and thereby signifying the deposit of itself in the bosom of that malign world, to whose enmity it is yielded — who, what man of our race beholding this strange history of the Word, will not feel a new courage enter into his soul? Visibly, God is not the implacable avenger his guilty fears had painted. But he is a friend, he is love." The nations "dare to hope." Pp. 215, 216. By these means we obtain confidence, and that which gives confidence, justifies. But does guilty man need nothing more to inspire in him a well-grounded confidence? Most surely he does. Dr. B. himself being judge, man needs the *semblance* of an atonement, though not the reality. But what is there in our author's foregoing statements to inspire confidence? Christ, it is true, comes in gentle form and manner. But what shall we say of his holiness, contrasted with the sinner's conscious guilt? What shall we say of the law as he preached it, more heart-searching, peremptory,

Digitized by Google

and avenging, than when it came amidst thunders from the top of Sinai? What shall we say of those terrific denunciations against sin which often make even the believer say: "I exceedingly fear and quake"? What shall we say of the prodigies which attended the Saviour's death, the darkness, the earthquake, the rising of the dead, agitated creation seeming about to perish under the awful displeasure of its Maker? In all this we see little to inspire confidence, much to terrify, and cast into despair. But when we ask, "What meaneth the heat of this great anger?" and are told that this is the great sin-offering, made by the Son of God, and accepted by the Father, as an atonement for our sins; — that the blood which streams from the Saviour's body is the blood of the New Testament shed for many, for the remission of sin; — that God can consistently offer pardon to sinners, and now does offer it, through the expiation made by the suffering Jesus; — and that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son for its ransom; — then we *are* encouraged; — we cease from despair; we trust, not in ourselves, but in Christ; and are reassured, and restored to God, through him. Now we are justified, not indeed because we *feel* just; but because God has forgiven us, and declared us to be just through his Son.

That no man can obtain confidence in Dr. Bushnell's way, is evident from the fact so abundantly affirmed by himself, that we must have in our imaginations, though according to him only there, an altar, a victim of infinite value, and a reconciliation made with God through the shedding of blood. But now, having learned as we do, further on in this discourse, that the whole New Testament idea of sacrifice is merely ritualistic, and without foundation in any actual transaction, we see not but God must provide for us some real atonement, or some other semblance which even Dr. Bushnell's ingenuity cannot detect; or we must perish. How else shall we obtain that confidence which is necessary for restoration to God?

Our author next proceeds to his objective view of Christ's mission. There is something more, he thinks, in the Scripture representations of *atonement*, *sacrifice*, *sin-offering*, *bearing sin*, opening heaven by *blood*, becoming a *curse*, suffering *wrath*, and the like, than his subjective view comprehends. Something around which the saints in all ages have clung with the intensest

Digitized by Google

affection, and over which they have shed their tears of tenderest emotion. But what is this attracting, heart-melting something, which calls forth the loftiest songs of all the redeemed in earth and heaven? Is it the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, through whose atoning death, and that alone, we have pardon and life? By no means. It is metaphor, it is moulds of thought, liturgical form, "a divine ritual for the working of the world's mind." And is this the atonement? To say nothing of the fact, that, on this supposition, all Christendom, in all ages, with insignificant exceptions, has utterly misconceived the matter; — and of another fact no less remarkable, that there is no class of passages in the Scriptures which seems to require, or even countenance, this novel interpretation; — the atonement thus objectively considered becomes little else than a magnificent show, a divinely appointed delusion, by which an imaginary altar may have the effect of a real sin-offering. We could almost as soon suppose that Christ himself was but a show. Indeed, if we understand our author aright, the work our Saviour performed in living and dying for us, was rather a manifestation, or a semblance, than a reality; exhibiting a human soul, when, to say the least, it is doubtful whether he had one; and seeming to die in great agony, when, being God in man's form only, there is little or no evidence that he actually suffered. We hope that we may have misunderstood Dr. B. in this matter. But repeated perusals of his discourses on the atonement and the trinity, have left the impression, that Christ himself, as respects his true humanity and his death, is quite as unreal as an ordinary tragedy.

A single consideration seems fatal to this view. To derive benefit from such an atonement, we must not suspect that it is mere representation. We must believe that it is based on fact. But, alas, Dr. B. has detected the delusion, and exposed it to the world. Henceforth there is no objective reality on which we can hang our faith. We have nothing left but "those methods of address which appeal to consideration, reflection, and relf-regulation." Man has no longer "a place where he can give himself away, without meeting any suggestive that shall carry him back into himself — an altar form *whose art is so transcendent*, so essentially mystic, that *all art is concealed*, and no occurring thought of working on himself, propels him backward on his old centre." P. 264. Henceforth religion must be chiefly philo-

Digitized by Google

sophic; and Christianity, so far as appears, "share the fate of all philosophies," by becoming nearly powerless. If our author's notion is correct, was it kind in him to expose that grand delusion which God had so artfully contrived for human good, and thus to peril the best interests of man?

We shall pass over, for the sake of brevity, the fact, that there are many passages which connect our salvation almost entirely with the *death* of Christ rather than with his life; and which cannot be explained on the altar-theory, without violence to language. Christ must be lifted up or crucified, that those who believe may not perish. He must die like a buried corn of wheat, before he can bring forth fruit. He was made sin for us. He bore our sin in his own body, — and he tasted death for every man. Is not here something more than a ritual, — even the actual substance, of which the Mosaic rites were but shadows?

We have another objection to this theory. It is not broad enough to take in the actual phenomena of the Saviour's death. He was singularly meek and uncomplaining in his disposition. Amidst all the scourging and scoffing which preceded the crucifixion, and the distress which necessarily attended this terrible mode of death, we do not learn that a word or a groan escaped his lips, indicative of what he suffered from his murderers. "He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." And yet he was several times overwhelmed by unknown conflicts and trials. Once, in the presence of his disciples, when no brutal soldier, or insulting Pharisee was near, he was sore amazed, weighed down, and exceedingly troubled, even unto death. Once, in solitary prayer, he was thrown into such an agony of mental distress, that a bloody sweat burst from his body, and fell in great drops to the ground; and he might have expired, had not an angel been sent to strengthen him. Once, while hanging on the cross, when his murderers, awed by the supernatural darkness, had ceased to insult and torment him, Jesus, crushed and deserted, cried with a loud voice: "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" We cannot account, on natural principles, for this distress. He came into the world to die. He was sustained by absolute innocence, and by the hope of saving a world. Great also in natural fortitude, he knew that heaven and earth were witnesses of his endurance, that the conflict would soon be over, and that a glori-

Digitized by Google

ous triumph awaited him. We remember too, that the apostle Peter was crucified afterwards, as tradition states, with his head downwards, but without any indications of similar sufferings; and that thousands of Christians have gone through death, in external respects no less horrid, uttering songs of triumph. Under these circumstances, how can we account for the Saviour's bloody sweat and passion, and his last long cries of despair, without supposing that he endured supernatural misery? It is not necessary to suppose "that the frown of God lay on his soul," in any such sense as prevented the Father from loving him. But how can we account for the phenomena in question, without supposing a transcendent suffering?

Dr. Bushnell, it seems to us, must have been deeply troubled with this part of the subject, from the mode of explanation which he has adopted.

"But why is he wrenched by this so peculiar agony? Consider, I answer, that, in the outward humanity of Jesus, there is held, in some close and mysterious union, a divine nature; and then will our physiologists or physicians tell us how long a vehicle so slender is to support the tremendous reaction of compassions and struggles of feeling that are so deeply toned! or, when the vehicle breaks under the burden, by what pathological signs it will be discovered! Besides, this divine-human being, whose interior nature we are forbidden to investigate, is unquestionably a sinless character, a being in the exactest internal harmony, that of purity, innocence, and life. He has never felt a throb of sinful disturbance, or shaken with one chill of death, since he came forth as a 'Holy Thing' into our world. Now, that which is itself the type and fruit of sin, bodily death, is at hand to be experienced. Will any psychologist or theologian tell us exactly how he ought to feel, whether he will suffer less than a man, or more? If innocence shudders at the thought of wrong, more than a soul that is dulled and half disintegrated by the consciousness of wrong, may it not, for the same reasons, shudder with a more intense horror, before the prospect of that complete disintegration, or tearing asunder, which is the natural doom of wrong? If, too, a massive engine may shake, or even sink a frail or poorly timbered vessel; or if a gigantic, masculine soul, knit to the body of a feeble and delicate woman, and, in that, called to suffer martyrdom, might possibly cause it to shudder and shake with a more insupportable horror, than the delicate, feminine soul appropriate to its measure would do, what kind of demonstration shall be expected, when the Incarnate Word is summoned to die? I only inquire, you observe — I assert nothing for the very sufficient reason that I know nothing." Pp. 231, 232.

This is one of the most offensive passages in the whole book. Though this writer professes to "assert nothing," he evidently

Digitized by Google

intends to suggest an explanation of those wonderful sufferings. And what is it? Why, it is perfect innocence shuddering at death, because death is among the consequences of sin. But, according to Dr. B.'s own theory, must not perfect innocence have been sustained by its conscious virtue, and by the smiles of an ever-present, approving God? In this portion of the paragraph, we have a real, human Jesus in the person of the Son. But with a singular confusion of ideas, the same passage fills out the explanation with a totally different, if not contradictory, hypothesis. What are these manifestations of suffering now, but an infinite energy working in and rending a finite frailty? We have no longer the Son crying unto the Father; but we have Deity himself shattering the human body of Jesus, in his efforts to shew forth his love to man. And what is this but artistic representation, played off only for effect, before the world? But there is another objection to this truly shocking hypothesis. The concealed sufferings of Christ were entirely mental. His *soul* was exceedingly troubled: his agony appeared in the prayer, that a cup of suffering might pass from him. And, what is more to the point, "when he had offered prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death," he "was heard in that he feared." Does this look like the Godhead shattering the manhood of Jesus? Or is it Christ, crying to his Almighty Father for help, and receiving the relief which he sought?

The same remarks may be made in respect to those loud lamentations on the cross. It was inward, mental suffering, the withdrawal of the Father from his dying Son, and not the actings of the infinite through the finite, which called forth the cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me!" If Dr. Bushnell's theory could be tolerated as respects the life of Christ, it is wholly unsatisfactory, not to say horrible, as an explanation of his death.

Christ's work, says Dr. B., "is more a poem than a treatise. It classes as a work of Art, more than as a work of Science. It addresses the understanding, in great part, through the feeling or sensibility. In these it has its receptivities, by these it is perceived, or perceivable." It is "a tragedy distinguished in the fact that God is the Chief Character, and the divine feeling, moved in tragic earnest — Goodness Infinite manifested through Sorrow — the passion represented." And he thinks that "it

Digitized by Google

would not be as wild a breach of philosophy itself, to undertake a dogmatic statement of the contents of a tragedy, as to attempt giving in the same manner the equivalents of the life and death of Jesus Christ." Pp. 204, 205. Dismissing "all speculation about the mode, possibility, interior reality of this suffering;" and understanding "that God has proposed, in this manner, to express His love;" then "all logical, theological, ontological, physiological questions are, by the supposition, out of place." We must "come to the spectacle of Christ's suffering life and death, as to a mystery wholly transcendent, save in what it expresses of Divine feeling." So much "of this feeling as we receive," we must "call the reality; all else is the *machina Dei*," the stage adjustments and decorations, "for the expression of this." P. 215.

It is thus, as Dr. B. maintains, that Christ "fulfills the office of a sacrifice, of which so much is said in the scripture." P. 221. The whole system of sacrifices under the law, which all Christians have hitherto regarded as typifying a real sacrifice that would take away sin, was, according to this writer, a mere drama, prepared and performed in presence of the Jews, not that God might be appeased by the smell of a sacrifice; not to effect, in any sense, an atonement or propitiation for sin; not to lead the worshipper to embrace the atonement of Christ typified in his sacrifice; not to transfer a merited punishment to an innocent victim substituted in the place of the offender; — but as a grand scenic display, a dramatic liturgy, designed to have a renovating power over the character, somewhat as the manifested life in Christ is designed to have; — and also to prepare correspondences, and forms of language, by which the more spiritual grace of the incarnate Redeemer may be represented. Pp. 224, 225.

Thus the choice of an unblemished animal, "the confession of sin upon his head before the altar; the solemn formalities of the slaughter and preparation of the sacrifice; the sacred blood sprinkled before the vail that is closed against unholy feet, the horns of the altar touched with blood, and the remainder poured out before it on the ground; the fire kindled, and the smoke of the victim rolling up before the eyes of the worshipper to heaven," the scape-goat bearing the sins of the people into the wilderness, the living bird dipped in the warm blood of its mate, the sprinkling of blood upon the people, — are all parts of "an

Digitized by Google

artistic plan to impress on the mind a sense of the holiness of God's character and the sacred authority of His government." P. 233. Why might not the awful scene upon Sinai, with its smoke, and fire, and trumpets, and the voice of words, so terrible that even Moses feared and quaked, have been a part of the same artistic plan, — the first scene in that tremendous drama, by which God, "the Chief Character," manifested his feelings toward his people?

"The sacrifices and other Jewish machineries are gone," says Dr. B., "yet they are all here — indeed they never found their true significance, till Christ came and took them up into their higher use, as vehicles of his divine truth." P. 249. The old theatre is shut up, but its wardrobe and scenic apparatus are transferred to Christianity. The stage is now Calvary, — the "Chief Character" is God, expressing his feelings through the apparent agony, and desertion, and overwhelming sorrow of a victim in the form of man, — the incidents are the sun covered with sackcloth, the earth shuddering as in throes of death, and the graves giving up their dead; — the spectators are a world assembled to be "flooded with rivers of divine feeling" represented by this stupendous drama, and to be restored to the love of God by its quickening power. It seems to be an awful sacrifice, but it is only "the most moving tragedy ever acted in this mortal sphere." There seem to be mortal agonies, as of a man bearing the world's iniquities in his own body on the tree; but it is only God acting a part, for the sake of the impression which these frightful representations will make upon the spectators. There seems to be one hanging upon that cross like ourselves, smitten of God for our salvation, by whose stripes of deeply experienced personal pain, we are healed; but it is only that "peculiar power in the divine nature, by which God is able to represent himself outwardly in the forms of things, first in the world, and now in the human person," apparently in a state of deepest woe.

Christians have stood from age to age trembling and weeping before that appalling spectacle, supposing that this Jesus was he who, by the shedding of his own blood as a sacrifice for sin, should have redeemed Israel. But they have been deceived into a salutary belief by the most consummate art; and have shed their tears of godly sorrow over a well acted tragedy! They have witnessed "the patience of his trial," the "meekness of his

Digitized by Google

submission to injustice," the "malignant passions of his foes," the victim himself, as well as the "creation, darkening and shuddering, with a horror of sensibility," the "life that was manifested, dropping into cessation;" and have felt a blessed hope spring up in their hearts, believing that Christ gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor, and that by becoming a curse he had saved them from a merited doom; but it was only the malignity of a race exasperated by the presence of obligation, breaking itself across an image of divine patience. So effectually is the "sublime art of Christianity concealed from us," that "we do not conceive it as art, but only as a didactic power, a doctrine, a divine philosophy." P. 250. The drama was so well enacted, and all seemed so real, that all generations have gone away, some smiting their breasts, and some wagging their heads; not dreaming that it was a mere show of divine feeling which was in this way seeking to quicken a dead world to the life of God.

This lecturer upon divine æsthetics tells us, that it is forbidden us to inquire into the interior life of Jesus. Why then has he opened before us the whole interior of this mighty drama, and forced us to see the art which God had so carefully and wisely concealed from us, — the machinery and painting by which the design of the contrivance is to be realized? He tells us that this scene was intended to have a "marvelous power over our impressions, concerning ourselves and our sins, the law of God and His character. It brings an element of divinity into every thing, sheds an air of solemnity and grandeur over every thing. It is even more awful to the guilty conscience itself, than the thunders of Sinai." P. 236. But it can produce this effect only so long as the art is concealed, and the spectator believes that the scene is just the reality it professes to be. As soon as it comes to be regarded as a scene in which the feelings of God are dramatized, in which there is no human soul to bend under the weight of divine justice, and of course, no suffering that can bring the visible actor into any relation of sympathy with sinners, — the whole moral power of the contrivance is lost; and "the centurion in the heart," who had exclaimed in terror and in penitence: "Truly, this was the Son of God," corrects himself and says, It is, after all, only the peculiar power in the divinity, by which God is able to represent himself as suffering and dying before us.

Digitized by Google

Dr. B. entitles his book "God in Christ;" but, in accordance with the view which he has given of the nature of the atonement, as a dramatic representation, it should rather be God AS Christ, performing the part of a suffering Messiah, in order to take away the fear of wrath which sin awakens in the soul.

We do not think that any man, saint or sinner, can be morally benefited by this explanation of Christ's work. Such an atonement cannot express God's abhorrence of sin, nor magnify the law in the sight of the universe, nor render it any more just for God to pardon the guilty than without such a display, nor bring sinners to repentance, nor renovate character by forming a crucified Saviour in the soul. And no Christian who has found, as he hopes, reconciliation and peace through the atoning blood of the cross, will thank this writer for endeavoring to convince him that he has been totally mistaken in relation to the nature and design of Christ's suffering. We cannot be grateful to any one who would take from us our faith in the reality of the atonement. We may give him credit for his talents, for his industry, and his earnest desire to contribute his mite to the theological knowledge of the age. We may sympathize with him in his desire to see the church, throwing aside its prejudices, and mere forms of godliness, rise into a higher region of spiritual life, and enter more fully into God's plan. But all this goes for nothing with us, when we see that he aims to secure his purpose through a theory or dogma, which takes away the Christ of our love, and hope, and worship, and gives us another gospel in which we can find neither a foundation for hope, nor a power to save.

With regard to the final question, How ought Christ to be preached? our author answers in effect, just as if the atonement were a reality, instead of the philosophic at-one-ment, and the artistic "altar form," he had so laboriously taught. P. 271. This method must be adopted at least for the common people. They need a sacrifice, a sin-offering, an atonement, a justification out of themselves in Christ. The speculative vagaries of this discourse, —what could our unlearned laics make of them? A "sad figure," Dr. B. tells us, P. 267, "would be made by the rude masses of the world, in applying a gospel of philosophic causes to their own nature; for they hardly know, as yet, that they have a nature. How manifest it is that they want an altar, set up before them, and if they cannot quite see the blood of Christ

Digitized by Google

sprinkled on it, they must have it as a FORM in their souls; he must be a stock of righteousness before them; he must bear their sins for them, and be, in fact, their religion;" — "and seeing now their new peace, not in themselves where it is, but in God, they rejoice that God is reconciled, and His anger smoothed away." P. 267. That is, the common people must have just such an atonement as the Orthodox churches have usually preached; they must have Christ for the great sacrifice, Christ making expiation for sin by the sprinkling of his blood before the throne; Christ their righteousness; Christ bearing their sins, being their religion, and smoothing the anger of God towards them away. What an amazing admission have we here! It seems that the received doctrine of the atonement is not so horrible after all! These formidable objections which never can be explained away, appear now to be objections only to the learned. The common people see nothing inconsistent with the justice of God, in his permitting the innocent Jesus to suffer in the place of sinful men. It does not shock them that Christ bears their sins, honors the violated law by his expiatory sufferings, makes provision for their salvation, becomes their righteousness, and even appeases the anger of God towards them by his blood. Nay, they must have just such a religion as the orthodox ministry has usually taught. This is so necessary, that God himself has provided a grand delusion for the masses, whereby for the salvation of their souls, they may believe in an atonement which is utterly untrue. Let no one say, that this seems to impute immorality to God. Necessity is above law. Man must be deluded, or he cannot be saved. "If the soul is ever to get her health and freedom in goodness, she must have the gospel, not as a doctrine only, but as a rite before her, a righteousness, a ransom, a sacrifice, a lamb slain, a blood offered for her cleansing before Jehovah's altar." P. 266. This delusion is designed chiefly, indeed, for the common people, but not entirely. The most philosophical, if they would enjoy spiritual peace, and make progress in sanctification, must sometimes believe the great falsehood. They "will need often to go back to this holy altar of feeling, and hang there, trusting in Christ's offering." P. 271. "We need, all alike, some objective religion; to come and hang ourselves upon the altar of sacrifice sprinkled by the blood of Jesus, to enter into the holiest set open by his death, to quiet our

Digitized by Google

soul in his peace, clothe it in his righteousness, and trust him as the Lamb of God that taketh away our sin. In these simple, unselfish, unreflective exercises, we shall make our closest approach to God." P. 268. We read these quotations with amazement. They affect us strangely. We hardly know whether to smile or weep. We are to preach an atonement which is perfectly shocking if it is reality, but supremely glorious if it is a delusion. We are to tell the people that Christ in reality is not a sin-offering, nor a ransom, nor a substitute for us; but we wish them to forget this truth, and to believe, for the time being, that he is all these; since upon such belief, used for the ritualistic working of their minds, depends the health of their souls. Nay, we must all invoke upon ourselves a strong delusion to believe a lie, that we all may be saved. Certainly this is a strange vagary! Dr. B. takes the soul out of our religion, and then presenting us with the cold corpse, tells us to converse with it, and think it alive; as our salvation depends on this self-imposition.

But passing this point, will our author tell us how we are to make ourselves, or our people, believe that we have an objective ransom, sacrifice, and sin-offering in Christ, when both we and they fully understand that we have in truth no such thing. Can we, as men of sincerity, teach for doctrines, even to the common people, what we know to be false? How can we weep at the Lord's table over his atoning death, when we know that he neither experienced the death, nor made the atonement supposed?

We cannot think that sincere-minded Unitarians, for whose special edification and comfort the theory before us seems to have been constructed, will be disposed to adopt this mode of preaching. It is too hollow, too dishonest! Stripped of all disguise, it amounts to this: Use Orthodox language, with a mentally reserved Unitarian interpretation. And what is this but preaching as Blanco White and others of that class have done; or, as the Puseyites express it, in a "non-natural sense"?

Some error with respect to other matters may be taught with comparative safety to the church; but he who mistakes this doctrine, or in his experiments mingles a worldly philosophy with this wisdom of God in a mystery, poisons theology at its fountain-head, and spreads moral death through the community.

We took up this discourse, in the hope that the reports which we had heard respecting it might be found untrue; and that

Digitized by Google

although given to a somewhat reckless mode of speculating upon Divine things, the author might here, at least, utter the words of truth and soberness. But when we read, in his introductory remarks, the confession that he had preached the gospel for many years without any definite view of what is called theologically the doctrine of the Atonement, — that it had been "hung up before him," as a somewhat unintelligible specimen of dogmatic theology, for "manifold experiments," we confess that we were astonished at the presumption of a man who had so long dared to preach the gospel, in ignorance of its principal doctrine. And when we were told that "now, at last, the question had seemed to open itself, and to display its resources" to his mind; that he had embodied in this discourse what he hoped would "prove a true solution of this momentous but very difficult subject," and lead to a "reconstruction of our present theological affinities;" that he had found at last the key to that mystery "over which our fathers panted in the dust of controversy in vain;" and that he had been providentially furnished with an occasion of illuminating the darkness of the age with his newly discovered light; — there was a feeling in our mind that we shall not attempt to express. Since the publication of this volume, and from the manner in which it has been received, it is probable that the apprehensions which, as he intimates, had begun to rise in his mind at the time of delivery, have been partially realized. His confidence in the speedy adoption of his theory, and the reconstruction of our present theological affinities, must, by this time, have become "somewhat sobered;" and he no longer, we presume, "dreams of the possibility that he shall be able to solve so great a question to the satisfaction of any one."

Having thus considered the chief doctrinal points in this book, we come to the Discourse on Dogma and Spirit, delivered at Andover.

We find in this Discourse the new ground which he would offer to the Unitarians. He concedes all they ever desired, in regard to doctrines and creeds. But, on the other hand, his platform is less welcome to them than that of Orthodoxy. In offering them mysticism in exchange for rationalism he may have calculated upon a meeting of extremes. But we cannot believe that they who have rejected the terms offered them by Swedenborg, Spinoza, and Parker, will find much that is new or

Digitized by Google

satisfactory in these essays. They agree with the Orthodox in these points which he abandons, — that thinking keeps pace with feeling, in religion; that truth revealed to the understanding is the basis of piety; that the highest truths of religion are capable of being arranged in a system; and, that we may "render to every man a reason of the hope that is in" us.

The point at issue between them and us, is, whether the things which are revealed in the Bible, and which may be ascertained by a fair interpretation of its language, are to be believed, on the authority of God; or are to be believed, or rejected, according to their agreement or disagreement with our independent reasoning. But instead of removing this obstacle to union, the Discourse adds another, still greater, as we understand it; which is, that of the direct and supernatural communication of the truth to the mind, even independently of revelation in language. One evidence of it is, that Dr. B. sets opinion and inward illumination in contrast with each other. In thus contrasting "opinion and life," he says: "Opinions may be written down, or retained in the memory, while the realizations of faith and love and spirit cease and disappear, as they themselves do, unable either to be retained in the memory, or to be recalled, in any manner, afterwards. Spiritual truth dies with spiritual life." "Perhaps I shall come nearest to an exact representation, if I say that spiritual truth is God Himself, dwelling in the soul and manifested there." "The knowledge will abide" "no longer than the unction abides. And this, exactly, is the experience of every unfaithful disciple. His light perishes with his love." "Even the scripture that was light, grows dark again." Pp. 305, 306. It is the orthodox faith, that a divine illumination enables man spiritually to understand the Scripture; and that the withdrawment of that light obscures again the vision of those truths. But the truths may remain in the memory after the loss of this spiritual perception of them. And these very truths may again be so presented to the soul as instrumentally to restore that decayed spiritual life. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." But in this passage from Dr. B., the truths contained in the Bible are mentioned only incidentally. The illumination seems to be effected independently of them. And when it is effected, nothing that may be an object of thought or memory in a state of declension, can be the instrument of that recovery.

Digitized by Google

This is the mysticism which we think Unitarians are not prepared to accept. And we know that the Orthodox regard this notion as the fundamental error of Quakerism and Quietism.

If then, he has not furnished a new stand-point for the Unitarians, what ground does he offer to the Orthodox? We answer, nothing new which they can regard as true; but only some old errors, and many truisms put in a false light. The professed object of the treatise is, to promote the true revival of religion. And the means is, to subject the dogma of religion to its spirit. But this is not new. Nor is there an idea in this discourse truly valuable, and bearing on this main point, which has not been stated a thousand times by orthodox writers. We may fall practically into an overestimate of creeds and theology, of ministerial talents, and of study as compared with devotion; but the orthodox churches, and ministers, and theological schools do not need to be addressed on this point, as if it were one in which their theory is wrong. And yet this is the burden of the Discourse. It assumes that we regard the opinions which are "prepared out of the mere life of nature," as constituting the vital truths of the gospel. If our author does not believe that to be the case, he is insincere; if he does, he is mistaken. But we give him the credit of sincerity in this matter; for we find him continually referring to the present false estimate of dogma as the great incubus, from which the church is to be delivered, for the coming of the great revival. He attributes to this excessive estimation of dogma, the decline of revivals, the sectarian character of all revivals, and the "desolating sweep of scepticism, connected with the Protestant church." Pp. 292, 293.

Now we affirm, that he utterly misapprehends the orthodox churches of America, at least in assuming that they need to be reasoned with on this point. That they need exhortation, we may admit. There is, then, no great result to be expected from this essay among the orthodox portion of the community. And here we might have dismissed the discourse as a weak attempt to produce a great change in the convictions of men. But it contains so many incidental errors and misstatements, and so many dangerous insinuations, that we cannot consent to part with it, without exposing at least a portion of them.

The doctrine of the work of Christ is stated in a most offensive form, and with the most ungenerous implications against the ortho-

Digitized by Google

dox belief in regard to it. The work of the Spirit is presented in such a manner as either to make inspiration fallible, or the private judgment of every "spiritual man," infallible. These points, however, are incidental. The main positions of the essay are these; that the highest religious truth is communicated immediately to the soul, and not by the medium of propositions, opinions, or language; that this arises from the nature of religious truth; and, that the history of Christianity confirms it. These positions need to be examined.

He maintains that religious truth is communicated immediately, and not through the medium of language. Dr. B.'s fundamental dogma is, Illumination without the word, — spiritual knowledge which can neither come into the form of definite conceptions, nor be framed into propositions and statements. If he should say, that he only means to condemn the notion that the understanding can originate spiritual ideas, — or that words can convey them to the heart, without the aid of the Holy Spirit, — then we reply that he needed not to write a book about it, for the orthodox portion of the community; nor to proclaim it as the harbinger of a new revival of religion. If he is not contending with a shadow, it is opinion in religion that he condemns, — though that opinion be the result of God's teaching and guiding the judgment; opinion like the whole book of Proverbs, like the first Psalm, and the Sermon on the Mount, like the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Hebrews, — opinion, such as Paul, in the name of Christ, bids us form, about the place which faith and works are to hold in justification. In every statement he has made, we admit there is a chance for evasion; and for maintaining that he only means to insist on the necessity of the divine influence to make spiritual truth intelligible. But if he takes that ground, we must regard him as an unfair reasoner, and an unsafe teacher. "Christianity," he says, "is called 'spirit,' partly because it can truly enter us and be apprehended by us, only as we are in it and of it, and have its spirit in us. The letter cannot teach it, words cannot tell us what it is." P. 303. This, taken with the Dissertation on Language, goes to shew that the main, though it be only the implied, dogma of this Discourse is, that even a spiritual man cannot have a religious opinion; much less, give utterance to it. We ask again, What is the Bible, if not a book of religious instruction, enabling

Digitized by Google

men to form opinions on all the great points of the existence of God and man; of their moral relations; of human duty, destiny, and redemption? We further ask, What his own book is designed to effect? Is it not intended to convey religion to the heart? Nay, is it not an attempt to promote the very highest form of religion? But how does he effect his purpose? On his theory there ought not to be an opinion in it, nor even a word appreciable by the natural understanding of man. But instead of that, it is full of opinions in opposition to the opinions of the existing church, and the churches of the last fourteen centuries.

Our author asserts, that "words cannot tell us what Christianity is;" (P. 303.) and he also denies "that theology, taken as a work of analysis and speculative generalization, is competent to produce a body of judgments that will be a true and proper science of God." Now in opposition to this, we insist that religion may become an object of thought or opinion.

Suppose it should be affirmed, that filial affection is so exclusively an exercise of the heart, that a child can have no opinions about his father, nor about his own affections, duties, and relations to his father; — this would be an exact parallel to our author's position. The understanding cannot love, we all know; but it is the medium through which the heart receives those conceptions of parental excellence, and of the filial relation, which fill it with its undefinable affections. *Specific* facts, as all agree, are the objects of opinion. Are there any specific facts in the Bible which form the objects of opinion? And especially are there any facts revealed in the Scriptures, which go to nourish the life of piety? For, if there are, then to believe them, is to have an opinion or dogma. For instance; the Pantheist says, there is no personal God; and that none such made the world. The spiritual man answers him in the common language of men; exhibiting one of the profoundest mysteries of Christianity, and one of the most fundamental and life-nourishing truths: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." He has here asserted an opinion or dogma. And every adjective he employs in religion, and every verb, involves a proposition. The author seems to maintain, however, that every such proposition must contain "some decision of natural judgment." Indeed, thinking seems to be held by him in horror. He would seem to sweep away the possibility of thinking at all, and of holding a religious opinion in

Digitized by Google

opposition to error. A settled religious belief he appears to regard as the very "mystery of iniquity, out of which 'the man of sin' was born." P. 290.

We maintain, in opposition to our author's views, that there are, also, *general* facts, which are proper subjects of opinion. Such an one is this: Faith in Christ secures pardon. Is not that a general statement, an opinion, a religious opinion, a Scriptural opinion, a nutritive and vital opinion?

Opinion, also, may embrace logical deductions. The question may be thus stated: Are there no specimens of reasoning in the Scripture? and is it not legitimate to infer from its facts in a logical manner? As a specimen, we may cite this; God's care for the ravens justifies the conclusion that he will take care of us. This is logic, — in a simple form indeed, — but it is logic; and it is employed by the great Teacher himself. If Dr. Bushnell's theory is true, such conclusions ought never to have come through the "incrustations" of logical forms, but by direct inspiration. But where is the wisdom of forbidding us to "compare spiritual things with spiritual," which is a logical process? While the example and authority of the Scriptures make the holding of right opinions proper, and even obligatory, our author finds in it the great cause of the decline of revivals. And to believe him, we have only to cease from using our understandings in the closet, in the pulpit, and in the pew, and the glorious predicted day will have come. For, after describing the triumphs of the gospel under the apostolic labors, he adds: "Many speak of this event as a wonder. In one view it is. But something like it will always appear, when religion casts off the incrustations of dogma, and emerges into life." P. 285. He ascribes the first decline of religion to its encountering the Greek philosophy, and coming under the control of system. And he afterwards sums up "this protracted statement," by intimating, that "results of so great consequence are hanging on the reduction or displacement of dogma." P. 299.

It is, moreover, obvious that the specific and general facts of revelation, and logical deductions therefrom, may be justly expressed in language. Besides his thorough denunciation of language in the Introductory Dissertation, Dr. B. tells us here, that when "we dwell in the light," we dwell "in the stillness, so to speak, of the light of God; for light is a silent element."

Digitized by Google

P. 309. And it is a fair inference from all his views of spiritual illumination, that words cannot utter it from man, any more than to him. And yet we are told in a passage, quoted too by himself, that there are "words which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Our author's second argument is historical. But it is so entirely made up of assertion and insinuation, that we need not weary the reader with an exposition of its fallacy. He has cited the leading epochs of Christianity to sustain his dogma, that dogmas have done all the mischief in the church; that the power of Christ, of the apostles, and of Luther, lay very much in their not proclaiming doctrines! Think of Luther, and the opening of his campaign with more than ninety theses nailed to the old church door at Wittemberg! Think of our Lord, and his sublime generalizations of spiritual truth; of John, and his declaration of Christ's person and work; of Paul, and his reasonings with the Romans and the Hebrews; and then turn to hear it declared that opinions or doctrines have crushed revivals, and hindered reformations. This book virtually affirms that the church of Christ was not founded on revealed truth; that Christ did not direct men to search the Scriptures that they might form their opinions; that Paul did not think much of doctrinal differences, although he pronounced him to be accursed who should preach any other gospel; and that we must cease studying, and give ourselves up to passive meditation on nothing, like the oriental quietists.

Our next objection to this writer is, that he compromises and betrays the cause of truth, by the view he takes of our ecclesiastical separation from the Unitarians. So long as the Orthodox body retain their present convictions, his position must be regarded as an abandonment of the gospel to its enemies. His language is:

"The manner in which dogmatism necessitates division may be well enough illustrated by the mournful separation which has taken place in the New England churches. Had we been embodied in the simple love of God under some such badge, for example, as the apostles' creed, it is very probable to me that the causes of the division would never have existed. But we had an article which asserted a metaphysical trinity, and this made the assertion of a metaphysical unity inevitable; nay, more, even desirable. So we had a theory of atonement, another of depravity, another of regeneration, or the ingeneration of character, which required the appearance, so to speak, of antagonistic theories." P. 338.

Digitized by Google

So the real cause of the Unitarian heresy is, not any depravity of men's hearts, but the systematic thinking of the Orthodox divines. And, it is "even desirable," if we will reduce our knowledge to order, that other men should believe and proclaim falsehood. And the Unitarians are not nearly so deserving of blame in this whole matter, as the Orthodox. Certainly Dr. Bushnell cannot ask us to recognize him as a true and faithful minister of Christ's gospel, if he is to place all the heresy of the great declension in New England at the door of the friends of that gospel. We do not seek in these remarks to convince him or any other person; but simply to express our opinion of his position.

This essay on Dogma we regard, partly as a circuitous and clumsy exhibition of the truism, that the acts of the understanding are not the exercises of the heart, and must not be substituted for them; and partly as an unsustained psychology, asserting, but not proving, that truth is perceptible by the heart, and cannot be shaped into propositions, which are formulas of the understanding.

An inconsistency between the theory and practice of Dr. B. on the subject of dogma remains to be noticed. He severely assails the dogmatism of others; yet few writers are more intensely dogmatic than he. Indeed, his zeal in exploding existing dogmas seems to be designed simply to prepare the way for others of his own. Those who have read with any care his successive publications, will easily discover that he is, step by step, developing a new theory of the universe, based on peculiar views, held by him, of the necessary limitations of all created minds, and the consequent origin of sin. He has not yet fully brought out all parts of his system; but there is no difficulty in stating its prominent outlines. In doing this, we deem it perfectly proper to illustrate from his other works, the radical theory which runs through these volumes, and which imparts a coloring to all his modes of thought.

The theory is, that an experiment of evil, and therefore a fall and bondage under the laws of evil, is, to all moral beings, a necessary part of a spiritual education, from the very nature of a new-created, inexperienced, and limited mind. This theory is developed, on P. 239, and is also set forth in his work on "Christian Nurture" in the following terms: "Spiritual education, or what is the same, probation, that which trains

Digitized by Google

a being for stable intelligent virtue hereafter, would involve an experiment of evil, therefore a fall and bondage under the laws of evil." This he says on the supposition that a child were even to be "born as clear of natural prejudice or damage as Adam was before his sin."

An experiment in sin, therefore, is a necessary part of all finished spiritual education. This principle is pregnant with most important consequences. The church has in all ages believed in the doctrine of holy angels who never fell, but have been confirmed in good without a previous experiment of evil. This, according to the dogma of Dr. Bushnell, must be dismissed as inconsistent with the nature of spiritual education or probation. Many readers of the work on Christian Nurture saw that it tended to this result; but did not suppose that Dr. Bushnell had contemplated it, and was prepared to admit and defend it. But, in this work, he waxes bold, and casts the whole doctrine of angels into those "immense masses of theologic rubbish," which "must ultimately disappear." P. 314.

From this fruitful root he also derives the necessity of that development of God which is made in the atonement, as a means of breaking the power of evil, and extricating man from that bondage into which he always falls. P. 240.

It is also plain that those developments of God which Dr. B. calls personations, and in which his trinity consists, are designed to gain the same end; that is, to extricate man from that state of bondage to evil, into which all created minds fall as a necessary part of a finished spiritual education. And it is curious to remark that the process in each case is substantially the same, namely, dramatizing some being or event, so as to make them appear to be what they are not. In the case of the Absolute Deity, he is dramatized by being set forth in finite forms; which, just so far as they are finite, do not truly represent him at all, but leave him in reality just as entirely unknown as he was before. The Trinity, therefore, is a dramatizing of God, for the sake of our minds, so as to make him appear to be what he is not. The atonement is also a dramatizing of the death of Christ, for the sake of our minds, so as to make it appear to be a real sin-offering, when in fact it is no such thing.

Nor is this the limit of the operation of Dr. Bushnell's radical theory as to the origin of sin, its necessity as a means of spiritual

Digitized by Google

education, and the mode of recovering a fallen mind from its power. It entirely controls his views on the subject of the fall of Adam and of his posterity, and the mode of their restoration through Christian nurture.

What, then, according to Dr. B., was the fall in Adam? Not the fact that man came into a fallen state because of his sin; for the same would have happened if he had not sinned; but simply an augmented predisposition to sin, bodily and mental, transmitted to his posterity according to well known physical laws, — and in addition to this, organic family influences, anterior to responsible and individual agency. These things, according to Dr. B., exhaust the idea of the fall. In it there is no special mystery; it is the obvious result of common physiological and moral laws. And as these laws may work in either direction, it follows that the effect of the fall may be increased or diminished by a course of measures adapted to a given result under those laws.

Out of these views grows his peculiar theory of Christian nurture, concerning which so much has been said. It is not a theory as to a mode of avoiding sin; inasmuch as an experience in sin, is necessary to the finished education of children. It is simply a mode of removing, through parents and the family, the additional proclivity to sin resulting from the fall of Adam; so that children shall be restored, for all practical purposes, to a state similar to that in which Adam, or any other being, might have been before his fall. This is a state in which there shall be developed, from the first, a love of the right for its own sake, as a basis of the struggle with evil into which it is necessary for all to fall, in order to have an experience of evil as well as of good.

According to the theory, neither Adam nor any being was in a better state than this, anterior to the commencement of moral agency; and to a state as good as this, a child may, through his parents, be brought. For first, by a holy line of ancestry, constitutional predispositions to evil may be much diminished; and secondly, by organic family influences, anterior to intelligent individual agency, he may be so set forth as to begin moral action with a preponderating love of the right and the true for their own sake.

Dr. B.'s dogmatic decisions, then, relate to the following points: The origin of evil in all races and all worlds; — The operation of the fall of Adam; — The method of reversing the influences of

Digitized by Google

the fall, so that, through parents, children shall be restored for all practical purposes, to a state similar to that of Adam before the fall; — The nature of the absolute and unrevealed Divinity, and his mode of revealing himself by dramatizing himself as being what he is not; — The mode of extricating the mind, by these and similar dramatizings from that entanglement in sinful habits and courses, into which all minds from the laws of their nature, necessarily fall; — And, the mode of representing dramatically, an atonement which has no existence, in such a way that it may affect the mind like reality, and thus aid still farther in delivering it from its necessary involution in sin.

Now whether his views on all these points are true or false, they are abundantly dogmatic. Nor does he, nor do we, find that language is inadequate to state his dogmatism. A creed could be constructed out of materials furnished by Dr. B., as systematic as the creed of the Council of Trent, or that of the Synod of Dort.

The effect, too, of his fundamental theory of the origin of evil, is to degrade our conceptions of the nature of finite minds, and of the system of moral government over such minds, and to lessen our abhorrence of sin as in its nature inexcusably malignant. God can do no better in this, or in any other world, or in any period of time, than to create beings, the necessities of whose education must lead them through the regions of moral pollution and folly, in order to learn the worth of purity and wisdom.

This sweeping away of the great doctrine of unfallen angels, and of the devil and his angels, as commonly held, has not indeed been performed at full length. Our author has simply set them aside among "theologic rubbish," to be disposed of at his future leisure. The system carried out to its natural results would sweep away with these, the doctrine of future eternal punishment. On this point, certainly, language is capable of stating a definite doctrine; but, as Dr. Bushnell has not pronounced upon it, we wait for his next "utterances." It is no less evident that the theory of the Absolute Being, upon which his doctrine of the Trinity is based, tends to practical Atheism in the same mode that Pantheism does. For the revelations of God, of which our author says so much, all amount in reality to nothing. He says: "We can never come into the knowledge of God, save as God is brought within our finite molds of action." And yet, so far as he comes into these finite molds, the Absolute Deity, according to this writer, is not

Digitized by Google

truly represented, but misrepresented. P. 144. We are, therefore, no nearer to knowing him than before. Ritter, in his account of Xenophanes, the celebrated Eleatic philosopher, exhibits the natural result of such views: "Seeing that man is forced to represent to himself the individual, and also being ignorant how the cognition of individual phenomena could lead to a knowledge of the Deity, he found himself in a painful position; desiring, on the one hand, to arrive at a knowledge of God, who is the truth; and, on the other, forced to look to individuals, — in and by themselves truthless appearances." The fact is, that if the human mind is not so made in the image of God, that the ideas of knowledge, choice, ends, plans, purposes, love, wisdom, law, obligation, government, etc., derived from it, do truly reveal God, then God is, and ever must be, to us, an unknown God. If these do reveal him to us, then Dr. Bushnell's whole theory, as to the absolute divinity and the mode of his revelation, is false; and tends, in its results, to practical Atheism. The same tendency to undermine all religious belief, lurks in his theory of an atonement, which is a mere dramatizing of a non-entity. It tends to produce a feeling that all religion is a mere trick; or, as in the Romish Church, a mere matter of dramatic display.

It is also worthy of particular notice, that the foundation of this theory, is laid, not in Scripture, but in philosophical assumptions, of which no proof is given, but incessant assertion. For example, the passage on Pp. 137–139, setting forth God as the Absolute Being, to be revealed, which is the basis of his whole theory of the Trinity, has not in it the slightest Scriptural element. It is merely philosophical dogmatism of the boldest kind. And in general, though he weaves in, here and there, portions of the Word of God, as if to impart a Scriptural hue and authority to his philosophical theories, and thus gain them a more ready reception, yet beyond all doubt the main elements of his system are pure rationalism. No theory was ever started upon philosophic grounds, so wild but that some portions of the Word of God could be introduced into it, at least by forced interpretation, to give it plausibility. But such portions can be easily detached, and the system suffer no loss; but still stand on its peculiar basis, as a system of rationalizing dogmatism.

As we close this review, a feeling of sadness steals over us, at the occasion furnished for the remarks which we have been

Digitized by Google

compelled to make. We have set forth the proofs afforded by this volume, that the author, a professed minister of reconciliation between God and man, is Pantheistic in his notions of the divine existence; that he ridicules the doctrine of two natures in the person of Christ; that he denies the truth of a Trinity in the Godhead; that he discards the doctrine of vicarious atonement by the sufferings and death of Christ; and that he teaches other pernicious errors.

These demolitions of the truths of God's Word are like the doings of some Israelite, who should intrude "into the things which he had not seen" in the tabernacle of the testimony; and "being puffed up in his fleshly mind," should tear open the vail, interline the tables of stone, try his knife on Aaron's rod, and throw a handful of the manna to the fowls. There is scarcely any thing sacred in divine truth and Christian experience, which this author has not treated with a familiarity that disturbs our feelings. True, it is done with an air of seriousness, and protestations of zeal for progress, and with much power of composition; which, with many, will atone for all that is exceptionable in the book. But the splendors of rhetoric, and the solemn chants of a mystical pietism, can make no compensation for such destructive errors, which leave theology in ruins. When the very "first principles of the doctrine of Christ" are abjured, we see not how a religious teacher can do otherwise than to impose on himself, and his hearers, the workings of imagination for the motions of divine grace, and the flashes of fancy for the visions of faith. The most venturous soarings of religious sentimentalism will fall very far short of the threshold of heaven; and well deserve the remark of that Puritan knight, Sir Benjamin Rudyard, on the mystical preaching of one of Cromwell's chaplains: "It is too high for this world, and too low for the other." Even Coleridge could, at one time, lament the disastrous effect upon his spiritual health, of "delving in the unwholesome quicksilver mines" of German mysticism; and, at another time, complain of being bewildered "in the holy jungle of transcendental metaphysics." We know that it enfeebled his will, so that it could finish nothing that it began, and could conquer no temptation. Such mournful examples give great force to the inspired warning: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit."

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

The Publishers of the Christian Observatory take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the Observatory a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill*, *Boston*.

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

J. Lawrie

Vol. 3.] JULY, 1849. [No. 7.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Rev. Dr. Adams's Convention Sermon,	301
Review:	
A Letter of the celebrated John Foster, etc.	316
Harvard College Charter,	331
Hope,	336
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Sacred Rhetoric,	341
Republican Christianity,	341
Man Primeval,	342
History of American Baptist Missions,	342
The Earth and Man,	343
The Catechism Tested by the Bible,	343
Address to the Suffolk North Association,	344
Annals of Salem,	345
Life of Thomas Hooker,	345
Pilgrim of Ninety Years,	346
The Good and the Bad in the Roman Catholic Church,	346
Celebrations,	347
Ecclesiastical Lists,	348

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

A large extra edition of the June number of the Christian Observatory has been struck off. It contains a searching and thorough review of Dr. Bushnell's recent work, occupying sixty pages.

Booksellers and others will be supplied on moderate terms for cash.

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office six dollars, shall receive four copies of the Christian Observatory for 1849.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863 July 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. JULY, 1849. No. 7.

A SERMON,

PREACHED BEFORE THE CONVENTION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS, IN BRATTLE STREET MEETING-HOUSE, MAY 31, 1849. BY NEHEMIAH ADAMS, PASTOR OF ESSEX STREET CHURCH, BOSTON.

II. TIM. I. 12. — For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

ASSURANCE of faith is justly expected of one whose professional business is to persuade men to believe. An ambassador is expected to be fully assured with regard to the nature and terms of his negotiation. It is as much to be expected of a minister of Christ that he shall feel sure of the way of salvation which he proposes to men, as that a pilot should be able to say to a ship-master in the offing, I am sure that I can take you to port. A guide who is uncertain as to the way, is no guide. A teacher who does not know assuredly that which he professes to teach, is so far an impostor.

A minister of Christ cannot be expected to speak with certainty of things in religion upon which revelation is silent. But he is justly expected to say what things are revealed to faith, and to inculcate them; there must be in his mind certain truths relating to God, and man, retribution, and the way to be saved; these truths must be as positively fixed in his mind as the rules of grammar and of numbers are in the belief of a school teacher. If there be any meaning in his name, ambassador for Christ, there must be some things about which he is fully assured that they are essential to his own salvation and that of his hearers.

Digitized by Google

In answer to this, some will say, Men, and even ministers, differ with regard even to the fundamental truths of the gospel. If they are all fully assured of the doctrines they teach, some must be assured of things which are erroneous; for of two contradictory propositions, both cannot be true. Is it right, then, for any man to feel sure in his belief? What is there which is not disputed by able and apparently sincere men? In such circumstances, how can a man be expected to have assurance of faith? Is he justified in feeling sure that he is right?

The great business of ministers of the gospel, all acknowledge, is, to shew unto men the way of salvation. Whatever doubts a minister may have with regard to other things, so long as he holds his office he will, if he be an honest man, be sure that he is prescribing to men the way of salvation which God has appointed. Through constitutional infirmity of mind and excessive self-distrust, he may not, as a Christian, have assurance of faith, in the experimental sense of that expression, to as great a degree as others; but if he have a common degree of honesty, he will cease from being a Christian minister when he no longer feels assured that he understands the conditions of the gospel.

Assurance of faith, using the term faith in a doctrinal, rather than an experimental, sense, necessarily depends upon the clearness and certainty with which the way of salvation is revealed in Scripture. If the way of salvation be not fixed and clearly revealed, there can be no assurance of faith in preaching it; fundamental differences of opinion with regard to it are to be expected, and it is presumptuous for any man to feel assured that he is right.

My subject, then, is this: ASSURANCE OF FAITH IS WARRANTED BY THE CERTAINTY OF THE WAY OF SALVATION.

Is the way of salvation fixed and certain? I shall maintain the affirmative of this question. I remark, then,

I. IF THE WAY TO BE SAVED BE NOT FIXED AND CERTAIN, THE APPOINTMENT AND CONTINUANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IS PREPOSTEROUS.

The ascending Redeemer commissions his disciples in these words: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned."

If these men had no definite conceptions as to the way to be

Digitized by Google

saved, it is easy to imagine what a figure they must have presented when they began to preach. That they should undertake to preach at all would be strange. The burden of their preaching would have been this, That nothing in religion is fixed and certain, except a few truths in natural theology, together with the immortality of the soul. The great Teacher has indeed scattered some principles like seeds given to the winds; time may develop them; but as yet, no man can assert any thing confidently in revealed religion, except that life and immortality are more clearly brought to light. Being asked how men are to be saved, what could they answer, if they had received no definite instructions on that point? They had received instructions, however, to this effect: "He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Being inquired of, What must we believe? of course they were prepared to teach certain truths, the belief of which was necessary to salvation. Unless this were so, and unless we as ministers now have, under the divine sanction, some fixed and certain way to be saved which we must preach to men, the establishment and the continuance of the Christian ministry is preposterous. The ministry may then be justly held up to the derision of the world as a profession without a science. Other professions have each a science. We, ministers, have nothing to minister but uncertainty, if there be no gospel. We are wandering Magi, for whom the star has never come and stood over the place where the young child is. If there be intrinsic uncertainty on the question, What must I do to be saved, for eighteen centuries we have been in a long dream; we are dreaming still, and when, alas! shall we awake?

II. IT IS REASONABLE TO SUPPOSE, IF THERE BE SALVATION FOR MEN, THAT THE WAY TO BE SAVED IS EXPLICITLY REVEALED.

Nothing is so important as the answer to the question, "How shall man be just with God?" If God is willing to save sinners, and reveals a way in which they may be saved, we might expect that meridian brightness would be concentrated on that way of salvation. Obscurity, uncertainty, here, are like obscurity and uncertainty in charts and light-houses.

In important concerns we demand certainty. We require that logarithms for the navigator be worthy of perfect confidence, transferable into nautical calculations without a doubt in the mind of the seaman. Our fellow citizen who detected and removed

Digitized by Google

an error in the Mécanique Céleste of La Place, established himself in the confidence of those who do business on the great waters. In the commercial world, uncertainty with regard to the policy of the government excites impatience and a panic. In the political world, we hear our fellow men calling out for something fixed and certain in the guarantee of their rights. The nations are demanding "written constitutions" at the point of the bayonet, — constitutions written in language plain and strong enough to make them feel safe in their vineyards and at their firesides, and to give them confidence at the Bourse. We may take the strong presumptive argument in favor of a revelation, viz.: It is to be supposed that a benevolent God would bestow a revelation upon man, and we may apply it here, saying, If God makes a revelation to man, it is to be supposed that He will make explicit disclosures of the way to be saved.

But further. Once being ascertained, that way to be saved must be so fixed and certain that it cannot be clouded by pretended revelations, human discoveries, or new interpretations. Schools of theology may not draw it into doubt; acuteness must not be able to detect a fallacy in it; improvements in literature and science, in the arts and the refinements of life, must not demonstrate the need of some other way of salvation. Discontent and unbelief must spend their arrows upon it in despair. Opinions may fluctuate from age to age with regard to many things in theology, but the earth's orbit must not be more exact and permanent than the path of eternal life. The pastor of the church at Leyden, on their embarkation for this new world, may say with regard to many things in the system of revealed truth, and we may still echo his belief: I am "very confident the Lord has more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy Word." But, if he and his missionary band believe that, in all their discoveries and experience, they will find any new light on the question, What must I do to be saved? we must conclude they have not yet learned what be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. In short, a man who proposes any thing new in answer to the question, What must I do to be saved? is as much a heretic as he who denies the existence of God. So momentous are the concerns of the soul, that if God provides salvation for men, we might expect that even the proofs of his own being would not be more fixed and certain than his revealed way of saving sinners.

Digitized by Google

III. FACTS PROVE THAT THE WAY TO BE SAVED IS REVEALED WITH CERTAINTY.

Wherever the Word of God has been received as the ultimate authority in religion, there has been such a concurrence of faith as regards the way to be saved as amounts to moral demonstration. It is as easy to learn the way of salvation from the writings of believers in all ages who have received the Bible as their supreme authority, as it is to learn the civil and literary history of those times. The truth on this subject, as well as on every other, has been by some perverted in every age, yet there has been a commonly received belief among the pious portion of mankind every where as to the way of salvation, and that belief has in all ages been the same. It has been held by Christians of different names, and of different persuasions as to many points in theology. Forms of baptism, modes of worship, disputes about original sin, special grace, and other things in great numbers, have divided Christian believers into sects and parties, and their contentions have been sharp; yet upon the question, What must I do to be saved? they have had but one answer to give, and that without any double meaning, or doubtful sense.

Among the poor and pious members of Christian churches, there is, at the present day, the same concurrence of views and feelings as to the way of salvation. Now the surest test of essential scriptural truth is the way in which it is received by the disciples of Christ in the humbler walks of life. Neither theological seminaries nor the writings of learned men are so sure and safe a guide with regard to the essential truths of religion as the opinions of humble and pious believers.

They subject their faith to the test of experience, not living as the learned are liable to do, in the world of speculation; but they depend upon simple truth as the daily bread of their spiritual life. Let a man present himself in one of our pulpits, professing to preach the gospel; the impression which he makes upon the humble, godly men and women, is the safest test of his doctrine and spirit, whether they be evangelical. If he be unsound or wanting in experimental piety, they will say he does not reach their hearts. The Saviour selected this as one of the proofs by which his forerunner might know that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand. If you sound a distinct note with your voice near a certain instrument of many strings, there are strings in that

Digitized by Google

instrument which will own the sound, and respond to it. You will hear their soft responses, if your sound be gentle; or a loud and joyous answer, if such be the tone of your voice. So when a man, with his heart renewed by the Holy Ghost, speaks the truth as it is in Jesus, there are hidden sensibilities in the congregation, among the unlearned as well as the wise, which straightway respond in a thrill of approbation and pleasure. The gospel has made the larger part of its conquests among the humble poor, and, which is an equally noticeable and interesting fact, among the other sex. In the State Prison, man, in the Christian Church, woman, holds the priority of numbers. She that was first in the transgression has retrieved her reputatión at the sepulchre of her Redeemer; and if that Saviour is absent from our preaching, the first complaint will come from a Mary Magdalene, or from some other Mary, saying, "I know not where ye have laid him." Ask woman what is the way to be saved; woman, of every kindred and clime, where the grace of God has shed its influence; woman, who thus far constitutes the majority of the redeemed in heaven. The answer, in its unity, and sweetness, and power, will be like that of the innumerable company of angels.

A powerful testimony with regard to the way of salvation is found in the history of dying beds. You have known every way of salvation renounced in its turn by one and another as they came to die, except that way of peace with God which the Christian world receives as the only way of salvation. Should we gather the votes of the dying, if all those emaciated hands could be lifted up in testimony on this subject, we know what the result would be. Has any member of this Convention, has any Christian pastor, ever been addressed by a parishioner in such language as this: 'You have taught me the way of salvation by Jesus Christ; I have embraced it, but now I feel it to be insufficient in my dying hour?' If there be any record or well-founded tradition of such a testimony, though in a single instance, we should be more concerned than when, as controversialists, we hear of an exhumed manuscript, or, as believers in the Old Testament chronology, are confronted with fossils older than Adam. The first Christian martyr seems to have given the tone note to the dying beds of believers since his day: — "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." That minister has reason to be happy who enjoys

Digitized by Google

these two kinds of testimony, the one to his natural, and the other to his spiritual, character: First, that the children love him; and Secondly, that the broken in spirit, and the dying place a high value on his presence with them. Has any one of us, as a minister of the Gospel, ever been rejected or superseded at a dying bed? An ecclesiastical council might depose that man, but this should not be to him the occasion of so much solicitude for his spiritual condition, as that a poor, dying believer in his church should prefer some other pastor for spiritual counsel and succor. In that honest hour, when the soul is ready to appear before God, we frequently have striking verifications of those words respecting the way to be saved: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste."

IV. THE APOSTLES EXPLICITLY ASSERTED ONE, AND ONLY ONE, WAY OF SALVATION.

They witnessed the effects of the gospel when opposed by principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. They saw it enter Cæsar's household; barbarians also, and slaves were subjects of its power. If we examine the testimony of these apostles on the question, Whether there was, in their view, any uncertainty in the way to be saved? we hear them say: "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again; If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." "Continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints." When Paul had said to Timothy, in the text, "I know whom I have believed," he added, "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." Paul, in his great experience as a Christian and minister, had not found occasion, when he came to die, to change his belief; nor had he been so

Digitized by Google

affected with the diversity of views among religious teachers, nor by the preferences and idiosyncrasies of different minds as to feel that one thing is truth to one man, and another thing to another. As he resigns his ministry into the hands of Christ, this is the concluding word in his resignation: "I have kept the faith."

I proceed now to derive some practical inferences from the doctrine of this discourse.

1. *The opinions and preaching of a Christian minister should be characterized by definiteness and decision.*

Whoever may be uncertain in their professional knowledge, they who have in charge the ministry of reconciliation should be clear in their views, decided in the promulgation of them, and bold in their defence. The reasons are, that nothing can be more clear, nor be witnessed by a greater amount of cumulative evidence, than the gospel; and, moreover, nothing which man can do is so important in its consequences as to preach the gospel. Here let us distinguish between questions in morals, theology, and interpretation of the Scriptures, not essential to salvation, and the substance of the gospel. There is a way to be saved. A minister may be uncertain with regard to many questions belonging to his profession; but to that question, "What must I do to be saved," he must be as decided in his answer as it is possible in the nature of things for the human mind to be on any subject whatever. If he be not thus definite and decided, one of two things is certain: He either does not believe that there is danger of not being saved; or, He has never felt the power of the gospel on his own heart. If he does not believe there is danger of not being saved, the wonder is why he should preach, unless it be to contend, as a hireling, with those who assert the contrary; and if they should cease to preach, what would become of him? Or if he has never felt the power of the gospel upon his own heart, why should he presume to enter upon the most sacred and important calling of an ambassador for Christ? A decided, faithful application of the truth finds a defence for itself in the human conscience; while indecision and vagueness expose us to contempt. The gospel is not, like some sermons, an organ with only one stop, and that a flute-stop; it has a sub-bass and a swell; and we must not only "play skilfully," but sometimes "with a loud noise." There is a mutual adaptedness between the Gospel and

Digitized by Google

the human soul; so that by manifestation of the truth, we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2. *The certainty of the gospel forbids us to be indulgent of error.*

It is inconsistent for a believer, and especially for a preacher, of such a gospel as that which we profess, to have that kind of sympathy for unbelievers and men in error however apparently sincere, as will lead him to say, Your faith is good and sufficient for you, and mine for me. We must be able to explain to them the conditions of salvation revealed in Scripture, to say that our personal hopes for eternity rest on the belief and acceptance of the gospel, and that we cannot encourage them to expect final safety in any other way. If we cannot say this, we do not believe that there is any fixed and certain gospel.

We are indulgent of error if we give the right hand of fellowship to men of all religious opinions. He that does it shews that he knows of no gospel, the belief of which is essential to salvation. Some men can worship with equal satisfaction in any meeting-house, mosque, cathedral, or respectable pagoda, seeking only for evidences of sincerity on the part of the worshippers. If Paul and such a man should meet in such a city as ancient Athens, they would not worship in the same place; for such a man would say, I can tolerate any thing but the dogmatism which insists on one particular belief as essential to salvation. The most transcendentally beautiful thing in all Athens in the eye of such a man would be the altar, "to the unknown God"; — such an outgoing of the religious sentiment in man's nature after the Absolute; such a yearning in the children of nature after the pure and the true. Paul's spirit, it seems, was stirred within him, among the Athenians, in a different way. He preached to them of the last judgment, and of Christ, the final judge, because he had committed his own soul to Christ "against that day."

Yet there are some who insist, that we ought to be indulgent towards error, because, in opposition to the doctrine now maintained, they insist that there is nothing fixed and certain in religion, every thing being controverted, and private judgment, therefore, being the only possible standard of truth. In their view, some men are blessed with more faith than others, in the same way that some are blessed with better constitutions. They think that some are believers naturally, or by habit, or by education; that

Digitized by Google

others, being less favored, believe less; but being sincere, are equally acceptable with God. The way to heaven, in the view of some men, is like the uncertain and billowy sea, over which the frigate, the steamer, the merchant-man, and the fanciful pleasure-yacht are passing; while here and there that little shell-fish, the nautilus, spreads its small sail and emulates the ships. Thus one man is strong in faith, while another has his little gospel, and is getting over the floods, perhaps, with less danger of being wrecked than the more pretending navigator, the great God looking upon him with equal complacency and acceptance; and now to disturb such a man in his limited faith, is represented to be as though the merchant-man should harpoon the little nautilus, or the frigate fire at him. I need not stop to say how contradictory to all such fancies are the plain, bold, awful representations of God's word, by the mouth of his apostles. The thought of such effeminate sentiments from the lips of an apostle does no less violence to our opinions and feelings with regard to him, than to think of Peter, for example, joining with the daughter of Herodias in her favorite amusement, or Paul and Silas singing with the choir in Diana's temple.

What a contrast in the intellectual tone and vigor of such writings as the Epistles, and of those books and sermons which plead for indifference in belief. To read the one is like walking in a forest where the voiceful oaks and pines remind you of the everlasting sea; while these effeminate and soft effusions of a sickly charity are beds of poppies gone to seed; their seminal principle is narcotic, and received too far is death.

One man who pleads for indulgence of error, will point you to the "one hundred thousand various readings" of Scripture, and remind you that every book of the Bible has been called in question in Germany. Indeed, it may, in his view, be said of the Bible, as Addison makes the heathen Cato say of a future state, that "shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it." Whether such a man is qualified to preach the gospel, or whether he has any gospel to preach, seems hardly to admit of a question. A just retribution upon such a man would be, that he be appointed to preach before this Convention from this text assigned to him by vote of the body: "I am set for the defence of the gospel." A greater number than usual would, on that occasion, probably leave the house before the collection is taken up.

Digitized by Google

What is that state of mind which leads a man to represent every thing in religion as doubtful? How far is it from infidelity? By what motive can a man be influenced who loves to dwell on the false assumption that Christians have always differed essentially with respect to fundamental truth? Such a man may belong nominally to the most Orthodox denomination in Christendom, as some of this description claim that they do; but his religious belief, there is reason to fear, is affected more by the publisher's advertisements in Halle and Berlin, than by his Bible and his closet. If some German free-thinker has a work in press, such a man thinks of it with great expectation, and on its arrival runs to see it almost as he would the Messiah. He is agitated after reading it, because that Gnostic has borne him still further from his soundings than he was before; and with regard to his faith, he experiences a verification of our Saviour's threatening, "And from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

May the time come when our theologians will disdain to receive spiritual instruction from unregenerate men, or be dismayed at their speculations, whatever may be their scholarship. Of the wisest unconverted scholar it may be said, The least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. There is more spiritual knowledge in Watts's Hymns for infant minds, than in all the writings of De Wette, Eichhorn, Paulus, Kuinoël, and Schleiermacher. Which of them has ever shed one ray of light on the greatest of all questions, What must I do to be saved? In ecclesiastical history, grammatical interpretation, geography, lexicography, and general grammar, we bow to the German scholars; but these are not the things by which, as the Scripture says, "men live." "Whether there be prophecies they shall fail, whether there be tongues they shall cease, whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away." While ignorance is not the mother of devotion, neither is learning. She is a handmaid to religion, not a mother. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. And "he that believeth hath the witness in himself"; receiving external evidences through the understanding, but relying most of all upon that inward persuasion, and assurance of faith, which, as a rational man, he feels must not be contrary to reason, while it is above reason. It was by this persuasion that Paul sustained his afflicted spirit before the contempt of intellectual unbelievers: "Nevertheless, I am not

Digitized by Google

ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." In the prospect of death he could say with joy, "I have kept the faith." No man was less indulgent towards error than the apostle Paul; yet, for our instruction and admonition be it said, who ever loved his fellow men more devotedly than he?

3. *The terrible denunciations in the Bible against false teachers, warn us to be well assured of our faith.*

Nothing seems to move the anger of God more than false doctrine, and they who teach it. There are no words which pierce to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit in a minister, more than the words of God to Ezekiel, warning him against indecision and unfaithfulness in delivering the message of the Lord. "O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his iniquity, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hands." By the mouth of Jeremiah, God says, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture. Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord." Our Saviour never seems to have had his spirit stirred within him to indignation, except when speaking of false teachers. "Ye blind guides!" "Ye serpents! Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell! Fill ye up then, the measure of your iniquities." "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." We have already seen in what tones Paul denounces false teachers. Even the beloved disciple cries out against them: "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds." But the Epistle of Jude seems to be one flaming thunderbolt against false teachers. It would seem as though there must have been verbal inspiration in the case of Jude, at least, to suggest such words of accumulated wrath. "Ungodly men," "filthy dreamers," "brute beasts," "clouds without water," "trees whose fruit withereth," "without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots," "raging

Digitized by Google

waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever."

Then he summons up Enoch, the seventh from Adam, and makes him prophesy "against these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." He seems unwilling to cease from his invectives: "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage."

Now the reason of all this is, that there is nothing in this world so important as divine truth; for by this, instrumentally, with its sanctions, the souls of men are brought into allegiance to God. Truth, not force, is God's appointed instrument of governing the world. Hence, error is correspondingly dreadful, and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against it. Here, now, is one important test by which we may try the doctrines which we call the gospel, and which we preach. Do we, like the apostles, feel assured that we are right, and that those who essentially differ from us are essentially wrong? The Apostles felt so. Their love to the souls of men constrained them to say of some, "even weeping, they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." In all their writings we find no weak indifference to error, no apology for infidels, but a constant asseveration of the truth, with warnings against those who pervert it. It is nothing to the purpose that bigots and persecutors feel that they are right and others wrong. This of itself, it is true, does not prove a man to be right; yet he cannot be right without this. For an essential feature of the gospel is, that it makes those who believe in it feel and teach that it is essential to salvation. If a man says to us, I preach the gospel, we must require of him this proof, that he believes his gospel to be essential to our salvation, and he must proceed to warn us, if we reject it. Christ and his apostles do this. A minister must warn and threaten me, or he does not preach the gospel contained in Scripture. If we do not feel and teach that our faith is essential to salvation, and do not, therefore, preach against false doctrine and false teachers, it is a sign that we have felt but little, if any, of the power of the gospel. If the

Digitized by Google

gospel which I preach be not essential to the salvation of others, it cannot save my soul. I am, then, a blind leader of the blind. If so, I may not perish alone. Some of my congregation may perish with me, and their blood will be required at my hand.

I turn from this train of thought to one more grateful to our feelings, and will close by alluding to the example of assured faith in the words of the text: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Here is assurance of historical and experimental faith. Assurance of experimental faith necessarily implies assurance respecting the truth of the gospel. Our occupation as ministers affords the best of opportunities for both of these; that is, to know the truth, and to enjoy its practical effects upon our own souls. A minister of the gospel ought to be a man of great faith, both as it regards his belief of the gospel, and his assurance of a personal interest in the Redeemer. If we feel the truth of one half the exhortations we address to others, we cannot fail to have assurance of faith in every sense of the word. Thus a Christian minister ought to be the happiest man on earth. He enjoys every means of knowing the truth, and of applying it to his own heart, and of profiting by the experience of others. His study, the sick-room, the house of mourning, the prayer-meeting, the pulpit, afford him the best advantages to be eminent in faith, and a partaker here in a large measure, of the glory which shall be revealed. If we believe all which we say to others, we, as ministers, of course expect to be exceedingly happy in heaven. We have had our minds and hearts cultivated, we are admitted to the very best society on earth, our thoughts and feelings are associated with things into which angels desire to look, we are laborers together with God, ministers of Christ, and "if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." A distinguished fellow-servant of ours once said, "If we only felt what joys are laid up for us in heaven, we should clap our hands and say, I am a minister of Christ! I am a minister of Christ!" Let us only put in exercise that faith which we prescribe to our fellow-Christians, and then we shall not wonder at the assured faith of that great believer, Hugo, which he once expressed in such words as these: "I eat secure, I drink secure, I sleep secure, as though I had passed the day of death, avoided the day of judgment, and escaped the torments of hell-

Digitized by Google

fire. I play and laugh as though I were already triumphing in the kingdom of God." If there be covenant transactions between us and Christ, such as are implied in the text, if we know whom we have believed, and are persuaded that he is able to keep that which we have committed unto him against that day, our hearts will respond as we hear Paul say, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice." Soon, as an early Christian once said, "we shall see that adorable head which was crowned with thorns for us." Soon, very soon, from those hands which were nailed to the tree for us, we shall receive that crown which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give us in that day, and not to us only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

The occasion admonishes me to say, If, from that fulness of joy you should look back upon a desolate companion and your fatherless children, bereaved not only of you, but of their former means of support, may your heart be comforted with the thought that you bestowed upon some like them, who were tasting the bitter cup of sorrow, a token of your sympathy this day.

May it be the peculiar happiness of those who have known each other here as ministers, in joys and sorrows, in counsel or in controversy, to meet in heaven. Some will be there whom we may not expect to see, and some will fail whose absence will astonish us. May we meet there our beloved and venerable friend, whose presence and voice we miss to-day,* but who will always be pleasantly associated in our minds with this Convention. His face is a benediction; must it be changed into an admonition? That "reverend head must lie as low as ours." It constrains us each to ask himself, Am I a Christian? I am a minister of Christ. I was, or should have been, a Christian before I was a minister; and when at death I cease to be a minister, the great question with me will be, Am I a Christian? Do I know what the gospel is from my own experience? Have I committed my soul to Christ, and is he keeping that precious trust for me against that day? Then "take heed to thyself and to thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Amen.

* Rev. John Pierce, D. D., of Brookline, confined at home, as it is feared, with his last illness.

Digitized by Google

JOHN FOSTER'S LETTER.

A Letter of the Celebrated John Foster to a Young Minister, on the Duration of Future Punishment: with an Introduction and Notes, consisting chiefly of Extracts from Orthodox Writers, and an Earnest Appeal to the American Tract Society in regard to the Character of its Publications. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Company. 1849. Pp. 119.

This pamphlet is anonymous, and we have no knowledge of its authorship; we can speak of it, therefore, with the more freedom. It commences with an explanatory statement copied from Ryland's Life of John Foster, respecting the celebrated letter of Mr. Foster on the subject of future punishment, and is followed by eight pages of extracts from Orthodox reviewers, and others, testifying to the general soundness of Mr. Foster's religious opinions, his great talents, the deliberateness and fixedness of his views with regard to future punishment, his consistent piety notwithstanding his opinions on this subject of future punishment, and his continued good standing in the ministry and Christian Church to the close of his life.

Then follows the Letter of Mr. Foster, which it was supposed would have the more weight with the reader by means of the preceding testimonials to his ability and piety; and also with the managers of the American Tract Society, whose names are printed at the head of the letter which closes the pamphlet, and which is intended as a remonstrance against some of their publications, such as the works of Baxter, Alleine, Saurin, and the authoress of the Peep of Day. In one place the author quotes from these works several hundred expressions on the subject of future punishment, arranging them in alphabetical order, and making an appalling show of terms and expressions on the subject of future punishment.

The whole design and plan of the book may be stated in these words: The Rev. John Foster thought that endless punishment does violence to our instinctive feelings. Hence the American Tract Society should suppress those expressions in their books; or reject the books themselves, which convey, in such appalling forms, the idea that the future punishment of the wicked is to be fearfully severe, and without end.

Digitized by Google

Many things are said in connection with this main design and argument which it is not important to notice. The great stress of the writer is laid on this, that Mr. Foster could not bring his feelings to admit the endlessness of future punishment. Our chief design in noticing the pamphlet before us will be answered by examining the letter of Mr. Foster.

Many of our readers have read this celebrated letter. To those who have not read it, and indeed to those who have, the following epitomé may not be unacceptable.

A young minister, the Rev. E. White, of Hereford, England, wrote to Mr. Foster for his views on the duration of future punishment. Mr. Foster replied, (Sept. 24, 1841,) saying, (and the remark should be borne in mind,) that he had made much less research into what had been written on this subject, than his young friend seemed to have done, and perhaps had been "too content to let an opinion or impression admitted in early life, dispense with protracted inquiry and various reading." P. 13. "The general, not very far short of universal, judgment of divines in affirmation of the doctrine of eternal punishment must be acknowledged a weighty consideration. It is a very fair question, Is it likely that so many thousands of able, learned, benevolent and pious men, should all have been in error? And the language of Scripture is formidably strong; so strong, that it must be an argument of extreme cogency that would authorize a limited interpretation." P. 13. Nevertheless, he declares himself not convinced of the doctrine by these considerations, and the reason is, that in his view, "the stupendous idea of eternity," (P. 14,) is a sufficient answer to all direct proofs on the subject.

He then proceeds to expatiate on the idea of eternity. In grand and awful forms of thought he illustrates this "stupendous idea" of never-ending existence; he carries us along the trackless wastes of futurity till we are bewildered, and we cease to feel the addition of other millions of ages to the already inconceivable extent, and billions, trillions, quadrillions of centuries make no more impression on us than tens or units. He then calls upon us to conceive of a human soul subjected to a state of suffering for such a period, which, however, compared with the duration yet to come, is not so much as a drop to the sea.

Dividing the ages, so to speak, of eternal punishment, by the sins of thought, word and deed, committed by each transgressor

Digitized by Google

during the period of human life, he represents the sinner as enduring an incalculable period of suffering for each transgression. At this his mind revolts. He cannot feel that this is just. It is disproportioned and excessive; no arguments, no words of Scripture, however "formidably strong," can satisfy him that God will punish any man forever, for the sins committed in this brief space of his existence.

Much of his reasoning on the subject will be answered when we speak to some of the points embraced in the foregoing general representation. The grand idea of the letter is this: Eternity is too long for the duration of future punishment.

This is a subject in which all are equally interested; and therefore, in writing upon it, we cannot but feel impressed with its personal relation to ourselves. Of all the themes of religion, surely no one is more fitted to chasten the feelings of religious controversy, and to excite feelings of deep interest in our fellow men. The doubts and difficulties of serious minds with regard to this subject, only serve to awaken our affectionate regard for them, with a desire that, if this doctrine be true, we may all "escape these things, and stand before the Son of man."

In remarking upon Foster's objection to the eternity of future punishment, we will present our thoughts in numerical order for the sake of method and clearness.

I. The existence of a belief in endless punishment in the minds of so many of the best of men is a presumptive argument that it is true.

Superstition cannot account for the continued existence of this belief, even if it had its origin in superstition. No one will think of charging the body of evangelical believers who hold this doctrine, with superstition.

The doctrine is not maintained through interested and selfish considerations. The believers in the doctrine have nothing to gain by proving it to be true. It does not make them richer, nor more honorable, nor add to their worldly ease. The contrary of all this is true. Its tendency rather is to abate the inordinate desire and pursuit of wealth, honor, and pleasure,—the Saviour's question, constantly occurring to the mind of the sincere believer, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Digitized by Google

Neither is the doctrine suggested or maintained by severe, inhuman feeling. He who seeks to prove this doctrine true, knows that its truth involves myriads of his fellow creatures in everlasting woe. If he succeeds to establish the doctrine, he shuts the door of hope upon many; though were we to say, instead of many, one immortal spirit, we should suggest a sufficient reason for caution and reluctance in establishing the truth of this doctrine. Nevertheless, the doctrine is believed and maintained by the most amiable and benevolent of the human race.

There are strong personal considerations which constitute very powerful objections to it in the minds of those, who, nevertheless, believe it. They see that it bears with as great force against them as against others. Except they repent, they will all likewise perish. If they draw back from Christ, they may draw back to perdition. Besides this, and perhaps it is the more powerful consideration, almost every believer in this doctrine has at some time a relative or friend whose religious condition at death excites fearful thoughts, and clothes his grave with more than midnight darkness. The very strongest temptations have been presented to believers in this doctrine, to find or create insuperable objections to it; yet the vast majority of Christian believers, who have lost friends concerning whose condition they entertain no hope, remain firmly persuaded that the doctrine is true. Now to such men, "the idea of eternity" is as "stupendous" as it was to Mr. Foster; the assignment of ages on ages of woe for each transgression, conflicted with their ideas of justice as it did with his; in short, all the objections to the endless duration of future punishment have occurred to multitudes of intelligent, wise, pious men in days and months of tribulation and mourning at the loss of unconverted friends; but they have adhered to their belief, and we are disposed to ask why their assent to it under such peculiar circumstances should not weigh as much as Mr. Foster's dissent from it? He had no penetration which they have not possessed; he also was formed out of the clay; he could present no claim to have his feelings of repugnance regarded as paramount to the feelings of submission and confident belief with which his Christian brethren in the hours of their sorrow have deliberately declared their faith in this doctrine.

If the doctrine of endless punishment be not taught in Scripture, who invented it? and how has it maintained its hold upon

Digitized by Google

the human mind through successive periods of time? It is true that many evangelical believers, especially in England, at the present day, declare, with Mr. Foster, that they are not satisfied to receive the doctrine; these, however, are dissentients from the commonly received belief of evangelical Christendom. Were the doctrine unscriptural, we should rather expect to find the believers in it a minority, remonstrated with by their Christian brethren, and avoided as a class of men of harsh views and feelings, gloomy in their faith and perverters of Scripture. On the contrary, the believers in the doctrine remonstrate, while the unbelievers are in a measure reserved and silent, and the wisest of them do not venture positive assertions on the subject, but state their difficulculties, and declare that they cannot accept the common faith. Enough has been said on the subject to make good and intelligent men re-examine the foundations of their belief on this point; but the result is a deep and firm conviction that the literal representations of the Bible are to be received in all the fulness and strength of their obvious import.

They who reject the doctrine of endless punishment have a formidable task in setting aside, we will not say the language of Scripture, but, the argument drawn from the commonly received belief on the subject. It cannot be accounted for, that evangelical believers should so generally admit and preach a doctrine which is repugnant to our natural feelings, unless it be found in Scripture.

II. Mr. Foster furnishes a sufficient refutation of his own objections to the doctrine of endless punishment, in his published views of the present constitution of things in this world.

In the pamphlet before us, the compiler has inserted a letter from Mr. Foster to Dr. Harris, which we think explains the origin of Mr. F.'s views with regard to future punishment, and makes us feel that a morbid state of mind was the occasion of his doctrinal error. We venture to say that if Mr. Foster, with the state of mind in which he wrote his letter on future punishment, had been an inhabitant of another planet, and had been told of our world, with its enormous woes, its disappointed hopes, its scenes of heart-rending anguish, its oppressions and cruelties, the triumph of vice over virtue, and the inconceivable amount of human degradation in heathen and pagan lands, he would have said, It is a libel on the character of God to suppose that such

Digitized by Google

a state of things can exist under his government. The following extract from his letter to Dr. Harris we think will confirm our remark:

"To me it appears a most mysteriously awful economy, overspread by a lurid and dreadful shade. I pray for the piety to maintain an humble submission of thought and feeling to the wise and righteous Disposer of all existence. But to see a nature created in purity, qualified for perfect and endless felicity, but ruined at the very origin, by a disaster devolving fatally on all the race, — to see it in an early age of the world estranged from truth, from the love and fear of its Creator, from that, therefore, without which existence is a thing to be deplored, — abandoned to all evil, till swept away by a deluge, — the renovated race revolving into idolatry and iniquity, and spreading downward through ages in darkness, wickedness, and misery, — no Divine dispensation to enlighten and reclaim it, except for one small section, and that section itself a no less flagrant proof of the desperate corruption of the nature, — the ultimate, grand remedial visitation, Christianity, laboring in a difficult progress and very limited extension, and soon perverted from its purpose into darkness and superstition, for a period of a thousand years, — at the present hour known and even nominally acknowledged by very greatly the minority of the race, the mighty mass remaining prostrate under the infernal dominion, of which countless generations of their ancestors have been the slaves and victims, — a deplorable majority of the people in the Christian nations strangers to the vital power of Christianity, and a larger proportion directly hostile to it, and even the institutions pretended to be for its support and promotion being baneful to its virtue, — its progress in the work of conversion, in even the most favored part of the world, *distanced* by the progressive increase of the population, so that, even there, (but to a fearful extent if we take the world at large,) the disproportion of the faithful to the irreligious is continually increasing, — the sum of all these melancholy facts being, that thousands of millions have passed, and thousands every day are passing, out of the world, in no state of fitness for a pure and happy state elsewhere, — O, it is a most confounding and appalling contemplation!" Pp. 38, 39.

We say, it is not improbable that the state of mind, or the habit indicated by these lines, of viewing events and things, would have led Mr. Foster to reject the historical assertion of the existence of this moral economy, were he not an eye-witness of it, just as he did, for similar reasons, or rather with similar feelings, reject the doctrine of endless punishment. We feel that the impressions of such a man are not a safe guide. He excites distrust and fear in our minds with regard to the government of the world; we should not feel happy in the thought that God reigns, nor see how the multitude of isles could be glad thereof, should we live

Digitized by Google

habitually under the influence of such views as those which he expresses in his letter to Dr. Harris. Mr. Foster's views of this world and its awful calamities are not modified, nor his difficulties solved by any representations which a Christian, we should think, would naturally make with regard to the evil of sin. The way in which we are accustomed to hear good men speak of the disorder of the present system is, to illustrate the nature and consequences of sin by referring to the calamities and sufferings of the world. They represent that as redemption is declared in the Bible to have for its object the instruction of the universe; so this planet, cursed with sin, and groaning under its effects, will forever serve to shew the inhabitants of other worlds what sin is, and what it can do; so that however terrible and inconceivably dreadful are the consequences of sin, they will nevertheless be for the happiness of the universe, by keeping other orders of beings in their allegiance to God. It is easy, of course, to step from this position into a boundless deep of speculation and mystery with regard to the origin of evil. But without venturing into speculation, it is sufficiently obvious that the government of the universe being a moral government, that is, a government administered by means of moral considerations instead of force, such considerations must be prepared to influence moral beings as will be eminently fitted to the great end of preserving and governing them in a state of rectitude. If God sees fit to employ the fall and the consequent sufferings of our race in this world for this purpose, who shall say that He is not wise and good in so doing, notwithstanding all that we suffer; especially when we consider that as we are constituted, our very sufferings are the means of a greater knowledge of God, and greater moral excellence and happiness to all who love and obey Him?

If this view of the present system be correct, and is sufficient to vindicate the ways of God to man, we may argue that when we know as much about a future state as we do about this, we shall doubtless see reason to say with the redeemed: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints."

III. We shall now state several objections to Mr. Foster's reasoning with regard to future punishment.

We nowhere find in his treatment of the subject, a deep, penetrating, Scriptural view of the evil of sin, such, for example, as we find in the writings of President Edwards; and which, after

Digitized by Google

all, is the true balance to keep the mind at equipoise on this tremendous subject of future punishment. Foster seems to commiserate man as an unfortunate creature, subject to a destiny over which he has no control, by which his birth and education are appointed under circumstances which greatly extenuate sin, insomuch that he cannot possibly be the subject of guilt sufficient to merit endless punishment. This is evidently begging the whole question. We must not consult our pre-conceived notions with regard to the evil and the just desert of sin. The great God only has a right to say what punishment he will inflict; and we must submit our views and feelings to this revelation of his will.

We all believe that "by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners," and that too by his one act of disobedience. If the consequences of that one act have been so direful, as all confess, we must conclude that sin is, in every sense, an infinite evil.

Mr. Foster's views and reasonings on this subject are also defective in this respect, that he does not bring to view the atonement, so as to illustrate the nature of sin by means of the propitiation required for its forgiveness.

Here we think, is the grand argument in favor of future endless punishment, in the minds of those who receive the doctrine of a propitiation for sin. Of course they cannot use it in arguing with those who reject the doctrine of the atonement, but we speak of it as probably the principal anchor which holds them surely and steadfastly to this belief of endless punishment. Believing that the Word, who was in the beginning with God and was God, was made flesh, and that an infinite sacrifice was made for sin by the divine and human Redeemer, they cannot believe that sin, which required an infinite sacrifice, subjects the sinner to any thing less than a punishment infinite in duration. God has made a manifestation of his views and feelings with regard to sin by the sacrifice which he has made for sinners; they who accept this sacrifice commonly feel and believe that if sin were not threatened with endless punishment, such a sacrifice would not have been made. It does not seem, so to speak, to be an economical arrangement that such humiliation and sufferings as those of Christ should have taken place, except upon an infinite necessity. It would have done less violence to our feelings that sinners should have made their own atonement, could they have made it; and that however protracted their sufferings might be, so long as they were

Digitized by Google

deserved, it would have been more suitable that they should have suffered, than that the resources of the Godhead should be drawn upon to furnish a substitute for that which was, at the farthest, a limited evil, to be followed, after the longest infliction of pain, with an eternity of joy. To take a case for illustration: If Judas is to suffer to a limited extent, and after millions of ages is to be restored to happiness, it would not be said of him: "Good were it for that man if he had never been born." Such an atonement as we believe Christ to have made, does not seem demanded by the exigencies of the case, if Judas can himself atone for his sins. It is only on the supposition that sin cannot be atoned for by the sufferings of the sinner, that we feel that the atonement revealed in Scripture is justifiable. This is the received belief of those who accept the doctrine of endless punishment.

One of Mr. Foster's objections to the doctrine of endless punishment, is expressed in these words.

"There is, or may be, in it what would be of mighty force to deter him, if *he could have a competent notion of it*; but his necessary ignorance precludes from him that salutary force. Is he not thus taken at a fearful disadvantage? As a motive to deter him, the threatened penalty can only be in the proportion to his (in the present case) narrow faculty of apprehending it; but, as an evil to be suffered, it surpasses in magnitude every intellect but the Omniscient. Might we not imagine the reflection of one of the condemned delinquents, suffering on, and still interminably on, through a thousand or a million of ages, to be expressed in some such manner as this? — 'O, if it had been possible for me to conceive but the most diminutive part of the weight and horror of this doom, every temptation to sin would have been enough to strike me dead with terror; I should have shrunk from it with the most violent recoil.'" P. 19.

Now may not the same argument be applied in reasoning against capital punishment, for example, or imprisonment for life? On the scaffold the culprit might say, "O, if it had been possible for me to conceive but the most diminutive part of the weight and horror of this doom," I never should have taken the life of my victim. "I should have shrunk from" the indulgence of my passions "with the most violent recoil."

Let any one read those affecting pages, the "Last days of the condemned," or imagine the feelings of a man in that solitary confinement to which convicts sentenced to prison for life, as well as others, are at first, for a few days, subjected; and he will see

Digitized by Google

in the thoughts and feelings of the condemned, precisely the train of reasoning here suggested by Mr. Foster. Take the man imprisoned for life as a manslayer. I committed my crime, he says, from beginning to end, within the space of twenty minutes. I am thirty years of age, and may live within the prison walls forty years. Thus, for each of the twenty minutes which the commission of my crime occupied, I must suffer, according to arithmetical calculation, seven hundred and thirty days. And indeed the less time occupied by the crime, the greater the punishment per minute, in the case of one imprisoned for life. "Had it been possible for me," he may say, in the language of Mr. Foster, "to conceive but the most diminutive part of this ignominy, privation, pain, I should have shrunk from it with the most violent recoil."

Precisely the same mode of reasoning against endless punishment, as being inoperative on account of its inconceivableness, may be employed to shew that the character of God can have no proper influence as a motive to deter from sin. For a sinner in the presence of the Almighty, face to face, might say, Could I have conceived but the most diminutive part of what God is, I never would have sinned against Him. The reply would be, that the invisible things of Him may be clearly seen, being understood from the things that are made; and that, therefore, the sinner was without excuse? In the same way it might be demanded of one in endless misery, who should plead that he had never fully conceived of such a punishment, whether any thing could convey to the human mind a truth more impressively than the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew expresses the truths of eternal judgment, and endless retributions? If the power of fully conceiving the truths of revelation be the standard of justice and of truth, then the feeble capacities of human nature are the limit of truth and justice; and further, there must be as many standards of truth as there are differences of capacity among men.

Had we room, we would copy Mr. Foster's graphic description of future, endless woe, and his inference from it, namely, that nothing can warrant such suffering; and then we would present, in connection with it, a view of the increased happiness of the vast universe as the fruit of God's manifested displeasure against sin. We may suppose it not impossible in the moral universe, that vastly greater safety and consequent happiness will accrue

Digitized by Google

in consequence of the endless punishment of some sinners. It is not to be supposed that the effect of punishing sinners forever ceases at the day of judgment. It may be, that, as long as they suffer, they will contribute to the permanence and extension of happiness in the universe; and when we borrow the light which astronomy affords, and suppose that myriads of systems, with a population which no conceivable numbers can compute, may be kept in allegiance to God by knowing what sin is in its nature and consequences, through the example furnished by the transgression and punishment of some of our race; and if we add to this, that not one soul will perish except for his voluntary sin, and will eat only of the fruit of his doings, surely we cannot say that endless future punishment is theoretically unreasonable. Especially if we add that, continuing to sin, the wicked will be deservedly punished so long as they sin.

But this implies that God will forever behold sin and suffering in his dominions; that there will be a place which will be a blot on his empire, and it is asked, Will a benevolent and almighty Being permit such a blot to remain upon his government?

This mode of reasoning takes it for granted that God cannot look on suffering forever. For more than six thousand years he has looked upon it, in forms which terrify the mind of man. It is by no means obvious that God will not look on suffering forever. How long it was before man fell, that the sinning angels descended to their prison, we are not informed; but it is altogether an assumption, which admits of no proof, that God cannot forever look on pain. All reasoning based on his paternal relation to his creatures fails, because many events happen to the children of men which an earthly father never would inflict. No sane man would set fire to his child's house, and consume him, and his wife and children; nor sink hundreds of his children and grandchildren in the deep; nor scatter a pestilence in the houses of his descendants.

Besides, it is a gratuitous assumption that the everlasting suffering of sinners will be a blast on the government of God. The penitentiary at Philadelphia is no blot on the government of Pennsylvania, nor the State Prison at Charlestown on this Commonwealth. There is reason to infer, from certain passages of Scripture, that the endless punishment of sinners, and especially of Satan and his angels, (and none from this world will, of course, perish who do not deserve it as really as they,) will infuse confi-

Digitized by Google

dence and strength into holy beings. Vast interesfs are at stake in a moral universe, and it may be that a great expenditure of vindictive punishment may be necessary to maintain those interests. The question would be, Is it for the best that there should be a moral universe? That question is settled, and now the only remaining question is, What measures are necessary to maintain this moral universe in its allegiance and happiness? We love to think of such a mind as that of Mr. Foster in the clear light of eternity rejoicing in that which once he saw, if at all, through a glass darkly, and joining with saints and angels in their "Alleluia, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." In this world Mr. Foster could look no further into the heavens without a telescope, than any clown. What matters it how Mr. Foster *felt* about future punishment? We have already said, Others have felt differently; and we could gather as powerful and as numerous testimonies to the talents and piety of many who fully believed in endless punishment, as the author of this pamphlet has collected in favor of Mr. Foster. All this proves nothing. "To the law and the testimony." "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherewith is he to be accounted of?"

Mr. Foster dwells at much length and with much force, on this objection to the endless duration of future punishment, that it "sits so easy on the minds of the religious and benevolent believers of it." P. 25. "If the tremendous doctrine be true, it ought to be continually proclaimed as with the blast of a trumpet, inculcated and reiterated, with ardent passion, in every possible form of illustration; no remission of the alarm to the thoughtless spirits." "The most prolonged thundering alarm is but as the note of an infant, a bird, or an insect, in proportion to the horrible urgency of the case." P. 27.

In such remarks there is not a just consideration of the principles of the human mind as susceptible to moral suasion. In waking a sleeper from a burning dwelling, we may adopt measures to rouse and save him which would only disgust the sinner if applied to his moral sensibilities. Clamor and cries of distress, tones of sorrow inarticulate through excessive grief, a countenance on which unutterable concern for the perishing should always be depicted, would fail of their benevolent intention, if employed Sabbath after Sabbath, and from day to day, by preachers of the gospel to save men. Christ and his Apostles were plain and

Digitized by Google

bold in their warnings; but they understood human nature too well to scream their admonitions, or to use the intonations of the affrighted.

We are all aware that scenes of indescribable wrong and misery exist in this city, and perhaps not far from our dwellings. Yet this knowledge does not keep us agitated and weeping. Human nature could not endure it. Our various duties would forbid it. We would ask, Whether Mr. Foster himself warned sinners as much as he should have done, against even limited future punishment?

No minister of Christ who believes in the endless punishment of sin, will fail to confess with shame and sorrow, that he feels the power of this awful truth so feebly; and that it influences his feelings in so small a measure. But he will make the same complaint with regard to his conceptions of the Saviour's love, of the evil of sin, and the blessedness of heaven.

But if we are correctly informed by the author of the pamphlet before us, there are some good and great men who, in his view, have been sufficiently faithful, on this point, and we presume that their faithfulness would satisfy even Mr. Foster. Here is another instance in which this pamphlet furnishes a reply to itself. The writings of Baxter, Alleine, Saurin, President Edwards, the authoress of the Peep of Day abound so excessively in representations of endless torments, that our compiler sees fit to stigmatize them with what he calls in somewhat vulgar taste, a "Hellomania." He has gathered two pages (71–73) in small type, of terms relating to future woe, from the publications of the American Tract Society, arranging them with much care, in alphabetical order, thus,—"A — C." "The abyss," "burnings," "cup of misery," etc., "D, E." "The damned," "damnation," etc., down to "S, T;" and then he says: "But methinks, I hear you cry, Hold! enough, although several letters of the alphabet still remain." P. 73. We are surely satisfied, if he is; though we needed no proof that Baxter and Alleine understood the terrors of the Lord. If Mr. Foster were living, these two pages of extracts from the books of our beloved American Tract Society would, perhaps, induce him to admit that some men have cleared their skirts of the blood of souls; and that the Tract Society is doing the same, and affording all of us the opportunity to warn our fellow-men with no uncertain sounds. We would, however, respectfully suggest to the compiler of this pamphlet, whether

Digitized by Google

there is a congruity in his italicizing those parts of Mr. Foster's letter which complain that the doctrine "*sits so easy*" on the minds of its believers, at the same time that he remonstrates with the American Tract Society because of the awful and superabounding terms in which they cry in the ears of men to save them from eternal damnation ? *

With regard to that long array of awful terms, we feel that it is not too long in view of the awful nature of the subject. Some of them, like expressions on every other subject in the writings of men a few centuries ago, are quaint ; and some of them are almost queer, and provoke a feeling bordering on the ludicrous, when disconnected from the sentences where they occur. But they were not conceived nor penned except with tears, and every considerate reader will make due allowance for their antiquated character. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that many, if any, of those terms, are of mere human origin. They may almost all be traced to the Scriptures ; or at least, the themes of them, as the etymologists say, may be found in the Bible. We could print two pages of terms from the Bible on the subject of future woe, which would seem as formidable as these quotations from the Tract Society ; and of which, it may be said, as a man once said to a lady who would probably have sympathized with the compiler of this pamphlet in his dislike of some things in Baxter and others : "One word of damnation in the Bible counts more than a hundred of Baxter's."

* This is not the last inconsistency in this book. The writer affects to be scandalized at the titles of certain books containing the name of God, as being of irreverent tendency. But next he speaks of some anecdotes in one of the Society's books ; and allows himself to say, (the italics are his,) "I must acknowledge that the change of *climate* in passing from the writings of Alleine, and Baxter, and Pike, to those of" this book, "is quite agreeable." — "May it not be that the Publishing Committee — in adopting this work — are converts to that *theory of alternate emotions* which some revival preachers have practised upon, and which justifies in the view of critics the strange contrasts of successive scenes in some of the plays of Shakspeare ! " This trifling with the most awful theme of hell torments, gains little credit for him in his scrupulosity as to other things. He is capable of that low vulgar talk which characterizes "Universalism," so called. Witness such expressions, italicised, as these : "desperate *hell*-ucination ; " — "A fair example of this lady's *hell*-omania," and his seventeen pages of unmanly strictures, on this same authoress of the "Peep of Day," notwithstanding his own gallant anger at an allusion, in one of the Society's books, to the "Lowell Offering."

Digitized by Google

The compiler of this pamphlet, after quoting some terrible expressions from Pike's "Persuasives to Early Piety," remarks upon the word "*Persuasives*," as an incongruous title for a book which deals so much in the language of endless retributions. Pike might refer the objector to Paul, who said, "Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men."

There are some minor points in this pamphlet, which we had proposed to notice, but have no room. Indeed the pamphlet is sufficiently answered, if we have succeeded in our attempt to answer Mr. Foster's objection to future endless punishment. The appeal must be to revelation. Revelation impresses the great majority of pious believers with the belief that future punishment is to be without end. We prefer to receive the literal representations of Scripture. Doing so, at all events we are safe; which may not be said of those who reject the doctrines of grace with their sanctions. We are sure, however, that "everlasting punishment" is as clearly revealed in Scripture as "life eternal."

We will add but one remark. The objections which Foster and others make to the doctrine of endless punishment, and the terror with which it impresses every mind, is to us one presumptive proof that it is true. A threatened punishment, which is to have a limit, would, we believe, have very little influence. Even the belief of eternal woe fails to deter multitudes from sin. We should say beforehand, that if God will utter a threatening against sin, it must be one which will smite the human mind with terror and amazement; and not one concerning which a sinner would feel that he may find some method either of escaping or enduring it, after which it will be good for him that he had been born. The doctrine of eternal punishment is the great working doctrine of evangelical religion. Many of us would immediately cease to preach, if we did not believe it. This alone makes ministers contented to live on incompetent means of support, and to spend life in the employment, not in itself to be desired, of admonishing, reproving, warning, and beseeching their fellow-men. We feel that Christ and the Apostles did this. We feel that we are making the last offers of salvation to men. We believe that we preach none other things than prophets and apostles testified, saying, that "there shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust;" and that some shall awake "to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Digitized by Google

HARVARD COLLEGE CHARTER.

A VERY important stage in the history of this Institution has just been reached. It appears that a joint committee was appointed from the two branches of the Legislature, in February last, on an order to "consider the powers of the Legislature, under the constitution, in regard to the government of Harvard University; and whether, within the limits of those powers, any legislation is necessary to render that institution more beneficial to all the people of the Commonwealth."

This committee presented their report just at the close of the session, too late for action. But it is of great consequence that the people of the Commonwealth should know the facts it sets forth; for, it consists mainly of facts from authentic documents. The importance of this report consists in its full defence of a principle which must change the ground of controversy between the Unitarian defenders of the exclusive and sectarian government of that institution, and those who call for a more just and liberal administration.

Many, who have quietly submitted to the unfair policy which keeps the college permanently under the control of a religious sect, which is but a fraction of the Commonwealth, will now begin to inquire; and inquiry will be followed by action. They have submitted to it under a belief which is altogether without foundation. Who originated, and who has perpetuated this impression, need not now be discussed. It has certainly been widely believed in this Commonwealth, that the government of the University was entirely out of the reach of the people, at least, so far as the Corporation is concerned. But it seems manifest from evidence here adduced, that the Legislature possesses ample power to make such changes in either of the branches of the college government, as will greatly abridge, if not destroy, any sectarian monopoly of influence in this venerable institution. The people's remedy is in the Legislature.

The first proof on this subject is the provision, (in Chap. v. Sec. i.,) of the Constitution of Massachusetts, as established in 1780, which is in these words: *Provided*, that nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the Legislature of this Commonwealth from making such alterations in the government of the said University

Digitized by Google

as shall be conducive to its advantage, and the interest of the republic of letters, in as full a manner as might have been done by the Legislature of the late Province of the Massachusetts Bay."

Then the question arises; what alterations in the government of the College were made by the Legislature previous to 1780? A few of their many citations will determine that point.

1640. The General Court appointed Henry Dunster to be President of the College.

1650. They granted the Charter to a corporation of seven, with power, "by the presence and consent of the overseers," to choose their successors.

1673. They made an addition to the corporation.

1694. They granted the College a new charter, increasing the number of corporators to ten; naming them; and dispensing with the Board of Overseers altogether.

1697. They again changed its government.

1699. They changed it again.

1701. They superseded President Mather, substituting Mr. Willard.

1707. The provincial legislature revised and reëstablished the charter of 1650.

These instances are sufficient to shew that the constitution of the Commonwealth now recognizes in the legislature, power to alter the number of fellows and overseers; and to secure such appointments as may be just and satisfactory to the people, and will best promote the interests of the whole Commonwealth.

The second source of proof is the action of the Legislature since the adoption of the Constitution in 1780; for that is the only legitimate interpretation of the proviso above quoted, in the act of 1780, which confirmed the Corporation in their rights and properties.

In 1810, the Legislature altered the Board of Overseers, and the College accepted the new law.

In 1812, they reversed this decision. The Corporation and Overseers obeyed the new law, under a protest, reserving their right to test the validity of the legislative act, by a judicial decision, which they have never seen fit to do.

In 1814, the Legislature restored the Board of Overseers formed in 1810, with additions; and in this form, it has existed to the present time.

Digitized by Google

In the absence of judicial decision, this legislative action must be the proper interpreter of the charter. And it determines that the General Court has the power to change the government of the College, as to its form and the manner of electing its incumbents, if it may see proper. At present they leave thirty of the eighty-three overseers to be elected by the Board of Overseers.

But the inherent power of altering the government of the College is in the Legislature. We have then this question to propose for the consideration of the people of this Commonwealth. Why is Harvard College, the favorite institution of the State, perpetually controlled by one religious sect? Not because there is any inherent justice in such a state of things; not because that sect is very large, it probably embracing not more than one tenth of the population of the Commonwealth; not because there are not gentlemen in the several denominations of equal ability with the seven incumbents of the office of President and Fellows, — by which we mean no disparagement of these respectable gentlemen; and not because it is the will of the people that it should be so.

The principal reason is, that no obvious method has heretofore been perceived by which this monopoly could be abated.

It is now perfectly clear, that unless that report can be proved to be either a false citation of documents, or a partial statement of facts vital to this question, the Legislature has power to produce, (in one session,) those changes which justice and the interests of the community require. And that the report is reliable in regard to its fairness and its fulness, we have abundant guarantees in the names of such gentlemen as Mr. Boutwell of Groton, Rev. Mr. Upham, of Salem, Mr. Kellogg, of Pittsfield, Mr. Stowe, of Springfield, Mr. Allen, of Shrewsbury, and Messrs. Giles and Bullock from the Senate.

If it be asked, What can the Legislature do? we answer, that it can do what it has done. It is undoubtedly the founder, and proper guardian of the institution, and has the ultimate power of control over it. If it cannot annul the charter of 1650, it can certainly modify it. This it has repeatedly done. The charter in question, though given to the President and Fellows, recognizes the Board of Overseers, as established in 1642, in a way that makes the existence of that Board essential to the validity of the charter. This Board consisted, at the time the charter was given, of the governor, the deputy governor, the magistrates, and the

Digitized by Google

teaching elders of Cambridge, Watertown, Charlestown, Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester. Had this Board remained unchanged to the present time, its permanent members would be the Orthodox Congregational ministers of the six towns above mentioned. This is doubtless the supervision which the original founders of the College intended it should ever have. It came into the hands of the Unitarians, through that great defection from evangelical principles which took place in the colony, chiefly during the last part of the last century, in consequence of which Arminian, and then Unitarian, clergymen, came to be the incumbents of the old Puritan pulpits in the six towns. Still, if the Legislature had made no changes in the Board, it would now comprehend in its permanent branch, all the Orthodox, as well as Unitarian, clergymen in the towns in question. But the Legislature has repeatedly modified the constitution of that Board, so that now the permanent part of it is entirely elective, and the other portion is increased to many times its original number. We see not why the Legislature has not just as much power to make changes in the Corporation, as it has in the Board of Overseers. If it should see fit to grant a new charter, increasing the number of corporators and naming them, this would be no more than was done under the Provincial government. The Legislature has an unquestionable right to make such a change in the Corporation, as to secure to all interests a just representation. Would it not be well for them at their next session to call for the history of the elections by the Fellows and Overseers, for the past forty years? And when it shall appear that one sect has been favored without any satisfactory reason, what is there to hinder the Legislature from so limiting the action of the President and Fellows, that they shall no longer be able to perpetuate this abuse. In the present condition of things, we think that even the *wishes* of the Commonwealth, distinctly expressed by its Legislature, would be respected. If not, there can be no question that there are ways by which the Legislature can make those wishes respected.

Something must be done to redress the people's grievance. The election of a professor here, and a professor there, from the other denominations, especially while all but Unitarians are excluded from the Corporation and from the College faculty, (unless we except, occasionally, a tutor employed for a year or two,) does not touch the vital part of this evil. It is the govern-

Digitized by Google

ment, the self-perpetuating body, which is now, and for nearly half a century has been, almost exclusively Unitarian, which calls forth complaint. The College is not, and has not been for a long time, practically, the people's College. It is the College of a sect.

We have looked on with grief to see that noble Institution so separating itself from the sympathies of nine-tenths of the people of the State, to whom it as really belongs, as to the other tenth. We have heard the plea set up, that the Unitarians have given the most money. This argument assumes that they bought out the people's rights over their heads. If they wished an exclusive control, why did they not take their wealth, and found a Unitarian College with it; which they might have held with a clear conscience? Why do they ask the whole State to patronize a most sectarian college as a State college?

We have nothing to say of the Hollis professorship, for the present. It is comparatively a minor point. We can readily believe that they would now choose a man rather acceptable to the other sects, to fill that office; or, better still for them, forfeit the foundation to the State, or throw it into the sea, where it would trouble neither their consciences nor their counsels.

But there is a still weaker spot in their line of defence. Harvard College, founded originally by the Orthodox Congregationalists, and dedicated to Christ and the Church, is, and ever has been, the property of the State. But practically it is not now, as it was formerly, the college of the State. It has been monopolized by a single sect; — a sect too, decidedly at variance with the original founders of the college, on almost all the leading principles of the gospel which were held sacred by them.

Without imputing more blame to the present members of the Corporation, than might be incurred by any other seven men, all of one sect, we insist that this exclusive control is an intolerable grievance. We have no wish to disturb the tranquil seats of learning. They ought to be kept as far as possible from the strifes of party and the struggles of the lobby. But there are circumstances in which forbearance is no longer a virtue. Justice must be done to the Commonwealth; or the Commonwealth will right itself, and that very soon. As certain as the American slave system is doomed to fall, so certain will this unjust monopoly of influence in this institution cease. The former result may be delayed for a time, but the hour of the latter is at hand.

Digitized by Google

HOPE.

READER, have you "a good hope through grace;" a distinct and cheerful hope that your death will be the beginning of life? Some beloved members of your family may now be absent from you. You have a very definite and delightful expectation of meeting them shortly under your own roof. Do you as definitely and joyfully expect to meet your glorified Redeemer in heaven, and to associate forever with Moses and Paul, and to be the companion of holy angels?

It is wonderful that the human mind can, in any instance, content itself with either vague conceptions or faint expectations of an entrance into the heavenly state. For that will be more to us than the glory of empire is to the ambitious; more than the riches and pleasures of the most prosperous earthly condition; more than the most refined delights of society, or of intellectual activity. It is more worthy of intense emotion, eager pursuit, longing desire, and enraptured hope, than all else that now enkindles the desires, or ever has drawn forth the affections, of men: as much more worthy, as the soul is superior to its tent of clay; man, to the clods of earth; the perfection of the soul in excellence, to the comfort of the body; the everlasting approbation of God, to the transient favor of man. We do not need demonstration on this subject, but exhortation. There is scarcely a human being who, on this point of religious truth, will not admit all that we have now affirmed. What we need is a stronger application of admitted truth to our own hearts.

Let us then turn aside from the more literary and doctrinal forms of thought, to treat this subject as its magnitude deserves, in a direct and practical manner, with serious desires to be made better by our meditations; and with fervent prayers to the Spirit of all grace, to elevate and quicken our sluggish and earthly minds.

Many are resting, as we have said, in vague and indefinite conceptions of the heavenly state. They cannot form any clear notion of what is desirable in it. The negative thought of escape from suffering, and the general idea of well-being, are perhaps the sum of many men's hopes; and they too, truly regenerated men. Now this does not arise from the want of sufficiently definite instructions in the Scriptures. They have said enough concerning heaven as a state and a place, to form the mind to the

Digitized by Google

most satisfactory contemplation of it. Before one has travelled in foreign lands, he has very inadequate notions of all he is about to see. And yet he knows enough to arouse the most intense longings for the "time of his departure" to come, that he may begin that new intellectual existence which he anticipates. And to this enthusiasm he has arrived by hearing, by reading, and by reflection. The same means rightly employed, will bring him to the same definite imagination of the eternal glory, and the same fervent longings for the heavenly Canaan. He cannot, perhaps, form an adequate conception of the separate state of the soul and body, nor of the kind of consciousness that will be inspired by the new body which the spirit shall hereafter inhabit. Yet there are abundant materials, out of which we may form a lively anticipation of that state. We need no positive notion of space or scenery for this purpose. It is enough to know, that whatever the most perfect atmosphere is to the lungs, whatever the most delicious temperature is to the frame, the most perfect music to the ear, the most beautiful combinations of form and color to the eye, all will be enjoyed by the new body and its inhabiting spirit. But this is not the life and blessedness of the place. These are higher in their nature. And we are even now capable of feeling the inspiration of that delight which they will hereafter impart. Now "we see through a glass" obscurely. Yet it is vision. Combine, for example, all we have ever enjoyed of the sense of reconciliation, communion, confidence, adoration, love towards God considered in the infinite greatness and goodness of His being, or in the person of Christ and the Comforter. Let that be purified, expanded, perfected; let the consciousness of a perfect personal excellence be tempered by a delightful recognition of our dependence on Christ, of our relations, — as beings created, sustained, and redeemed, — to the Almighty, all-beneficent Creator, and the kind Redeemer of our life. With all this consciousness of perfectness, will be possessed the feeling of security, as we cannot now know it. A new dispensation will have begun. It is no longer discipline, probation, chastisement, fear, and painful vigilance; but tranquil assurance that the need of them has ceased forever. With these shall be conjoined the perfectness of society, to bring continually into exercise that love, confidence, communion of mind and heart, which we have here experienced imperfectly; there they will be complete and unalloyed. Next to our best

Digitized by Google

seasons of communion with God, we enjoy nothing here so purely as communion with his people, the fellowship of saints. Repose there will not be periodical — as we understand from the declaration, "there shall be no night there;" and "they rest not, day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy;" — but deliverance from all that wearies, annoys, or distresses. Now we can say, as to every thing that disturbs us here, "there shall be no more pain in heaven." We shall be active in thought, in enlarging our mental horizon and our intellectual treasures; active in the affections of our purified natures, and the exercise of our wills. But the body will be "a glorious spiritual body," and know no weariness nor disease. Memory, in recalling our earthly history, will but enhance the sense of dependence and indebtedness; conscience there will have a peaceful office. Fear will have no more to do. No selfish interest will mar the intercourse of the redeemed, or for a moment sully the fair image of God in the spirit.

All these views are sustained by declarations of the Scriptures. And they are as definite, at least, as those anticipations of wealth, honor and pleasure, which so animate the world. The imagination may stretch its pinions, and soar to those heavenly heights; and at its utmost flight it will still be true, that we know but "in part." God hath revealed much to us concerning the state of the blessed; and yet, it is true, that "it doth not appear what we shall be;" only "we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

If, then, we have experienced any degree of communion with God, and with his people, — if the exercise of penitence, love, faith, or gratitude has ever caused us any delight, then we know something of heaven; and we may definitely meditate upon it, until our hearts glow with sacred emotions.

Then it is obvious, that if any true Christian neglects the study of what God has revealed, or frequent meditation upon it, he must expect not to have a very "lively hope." Faith is the mind's eye and ear, for heavenly scenes and sounds. But the eye must be open to catch the radiating light and the beaming glory of the celestial city; the ear must be turned thither to catch "the music of the place."

It is to be feared, however, that there is a want of sufficiently full conviction as to our duty in this matter. Every one admits that he experiences a great loss in not attaining to the "assur-

Digitized by Google

ance of hope." But there is more than a personal loss in it. We need to be reminded that there are obligations, as well as privileges, connected with this subject. The influences resulting from our enjoyment of the assurance of hope, would greatly affect the interests of others.

We owe it to God, to our fellow men, and to ourselves, to become as fully prepared for heaven, and as fully assured of that preparedness, as possible. The happiness of a child is the joy of his affectionate parents. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents. And if from repentance he goes on to higher and higher degrees of spiritual life, even to an unwavering hope, it must enhance that joy proportionally. Does our low degree of religious principle and emotion, our doubting and gloom, or our insensibility, either glorify or gratify our Father in heaven? No, they must grieve Him. And are we not verily bound to please Him? Surely no obligation can be higher or stronger. To say we owe it to ourselves, may be but another way of repeating the declaration that we owe it to God. But the obligation to others in this respect is very manifest. We are bound to our neighbor in many things negative, as not to injure him in his health, wealth, or good name. But that is only the inferior part of our duty. We must also, as far as possible, promote his highest excellence and happiness. Conceive then what an influence one Christian can exert, to elevate the thoughts and feelings of others towards the better state, and to aid them in preparation for it, by having his own views of that state clear and familiar, his personal hope of it strong, his preparation for it manifest, and his consequent joy a perpetual sunshine to himself and all around him! This is being a "living epistle, known and read of all men." This is being "the light of the world, the salt of the earth."

The awakened soul seeks to know that he is reconciled to God. Almost every truly regenerated person has persevered in importunate prayer until that end has been attained. It becomes then an important inquiry, Why the same persons do not, in the same way, resolve to "make their calling and election sure?" We believe it may be attributed, in a great degree, to the influence which comes to them from the church; for it is remarkable, that the greater part of the converts of any period do not gather their views from the whole Bible, so much as from the particular class of passages then most in the thoughts and affections of the church.

Digitized by Google

Older Christians and preachers are, therefore, bound to keep the glories of heaven, and its high attractions vividly in the view of younger Christians; and to dwell much in conversation, exposition, and prayer, upon those passages which describe the nature of the heavenly rest, which shew the qualifications for it, and which contain the assurance of it to those who have these qualifications. It would produce a great and blessed change, if this holy theme were more frequent in the meditations and conversation of God's children, as well as in the exhibitions of the pulpit and press.

We would suggest to our fellow pilgrims some practical counsels founded on this subject.

1. Obtain the most clear and comprehensive view of the heavenly state which the Scriptures present. For this purpose, study the Bible with the aid of references. The perusal of Baxter's Saint's Rest, of Howe's Blessedness of the Righteous, and similar works would conduce to the same end.

2. Study the Scriptural grounds of expecting heaven; and apply them prayerfully to your own case.

3. Regard the assurance of hope as attainable through the grace of God; as eminently desirable, as worthy of the greatest sacrifices and efforts it may require; as an actual duty, indifference to which is an evil sign.

4. Seek to promote in others the same desire and purpose.

5. Have specific seasons of prayer alone, and sometimes with others, for the obtaining this blessing, and asking God to bestow it on others. Remember especially ministers in your prayers; that God may enable them to preach as from amid the very glories of heaven, and with the sweet assurance of their own interest in eternal life.

6. Give Christ the place in your conceptions of Heaven, which he occupies in the Bible descriptions of it. "To depart and be with Christ," was the sum of Paul's desires and hopes. The person of Christ was prominent in John's vision of it. That the disciples might be with him, to see the glory which he had with the Father, was the gracious desire, and fervent prayer of the Redeemer. "Looking for, and hasting to, the coming of the Lord," was the characteristic of men whose life "was hid with Christ in God," — to whom the future had no glory of which he was not the source. Let the glorified person of Christ be more to you than all the world can give, and all the universe contains.

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

SACRED RHETORIC.—Under this name, Professor Ripley, of the Newton Theological Institution, has issued a treatise on "The Composition and Delivery of Sermons." Much has been written, and well written, on these subjects, and much that has been useful. But while we would not undervalue the instructions given to young candidates for the pulpit, we are more and more convinced, that, in this great matter of preaching, there is "a grace beyond the reach of art." The success of some preachers, and the failure of others, which can be referred to no obvious causes, can be explained only on the supposition that it is a special gift. Still, this gift may be greatly improved by cultivation and exercise. Let us be thankful to Professor Ripley for lending his aid to those who seek such improvement. — It is generally supposed that sermonizing, in our times, is very far in advance of what it used to be. But if it be tested by its effects on the popular mind, this may well be doubted. What living preacher produces such impressions by his oratory as are recorded of Whitefield and Edwards? Or we may go back one hundred years beyond them. It is recorded of Dr. Chaderton, who died in his hundred and third year, and who was one of King James's Bible translators, that in his old age, he was invited to preach while visiting his native county of Lancashire. Having held forth for two full hours, he paused and said: "I will no longer trespass upon your patience." But the whole congregation cried out with one consent: "For God's sake, go on, go on!" And he accordingly proceeded much longer to their great admiration and delight. Such an incident may well illustrate the following remarks in Coleridge's Literary Remains: "When, after reading the biographies of Walton and his contemporaries, I reflect on the crowded congregations who, with intense eagerness, came to their hour-long and two-hour-long sermons, I cannot but doubt the fact of any true progression, moral or intellectual, in the mind of the many. The tone, the manner, the anticipated sympathies, in the sermons of an age, form the best moral criterion of the character of that age."

REPUBLICAN CHRISTIANITY. — This is a spirited volume, from the pen of Rev. E. L. Magoon, of Cincinnati. It is one of three or four which he has recently issued in rapid succession. Though his reading has obviously been immense, and his memory is marvellous, we doubt whether any mind can long continue in such a strain of authorship, without becoming weak and dilute in its effusions at last. A prosperous merchant, retiring from the Canton trade, is said to have had painted upon the pannels of his carriage, at the suggestion of a waggish friend, the picture of a tea-chest, with the motto, "Tu doces," — *Thou teachest!* What teaching it might furnish beyond a satire on the unconscious millionaire, we know not; unless it be that no quantity of the fragrant leaf can produce more than its proportionate number of cups of the full strength of aromatic infusion. This book, however, has a strong flavor of Young Hyson, and pertains to the

Digitized by Google

"cups that cheer, but not inebriate." It has three parts, describing, in succession, "the republican character of Jesus Christ," "the republican constitution of the primitive Church," and "the republican influence of Christian doctrine." Each of these parts, by logic or fancy, is divided into five chapters, and each of these is subdivided into three sections. Consequently, the reader, if he pleases, can "imbibe" the whole in equal proportions. We cannot refrain from expressing some dislike to the phrase, "the republican character of Jesus Christ." It savors a little of the insolent familiarity of the red republicans of France, who speak of our Lord as the "Great Democrat;" while some of our own cadaverous radicals call him the "Great Come-outer." The Saviour is King, — and a King *in* Zion; and for asserting this claim, he was crucified.

MAN PRIMEVAL. — The Rev. Dr. Harris, a celebrated writer on practical religion, and a theological instructor among the Dissenters in England, is now giving forth a series of "contributions to theological science." Of his former contribution, "The Preadamite Earth," we have had occasion to speak in a previous number of this publication. "Man I'rimeval" is the second volume in course, and abounds with ingenious and original speculations on "the constitution and primitive condition of the human being," and on the laws of progression in the Divine manifestation by the creation of man. It is a nut for the teeth of such as are fond of metaphysics, and of inquiring into such subjects as sensation, reason, voluntariness, obligation, dependence, and the reasons of things which we see in human nature. For the consolation of such, we quote the following classical passage from Bunyan's vision: "Then said some at the table, 'Nuts spoil tender teeth, especially the teeth of children:' which, when Gaius heard, he said:

> 'Hard texts are nuts, (I will not call them cheaters,)
> Whose shells do keep their kernels from the eaters;
> Open the shells, and you shall have the meat;
> They here are brought for you to crack and eat.'"

Let the men of strong grinders and energetic digestion come to this rich and ample feast.

HISTORY OF AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONS. — The title of this book excites a painful sensation, at the thought that our sectarian differences should be carried out into the holy work of missions, and should label off these sacred enterprizes with the names of division and the shibboleths of party. But it is far better that our Baptist brethren should enter the field under their own distinctive banner, than not to invade it at all. The English Baptists were much in advance of their brethren in this country; but the American Baptists, though late, have gone into the business with such zeal, activity, and success, that already this history is called for. It is a well-written and interesting volume, from the pen of Professor Gammell, of Brown University. We take pleasure in referring our readers to the book.

Digitized by Google

THE EARTH AND MAN. — This volume contains the course of lectures delivered in the French language, in this city, last winter, and translated by Professor Felton, of Harvard College. They were originally printed as they were uttered, in that excellent and valuable journal, the Daily Evening Traveller. The lectures, collected in this beautiful volume, are in a somewhat improved form, and are furnished with some valuable plates and maps. The subject of which it treats, forms a new science; and is, probably, more fully presented in it, than in any other book in any language. It investigates the relations of nature to history, and of the earth to man. It abounds in striking facts, and startling conclusions; and contains, as we may well say, "a world of information." It is pervaded by a truly religious spirit, and presents a most cheering prospect as to the providential indications of the destiny which awaits the human race even in the present world. We earnestly commend this work, and its gifted author, to every one who is able to read, and think, and feel.

We may here remark, that the five books just noticed are all published, and that in very handsome form, by Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, of this city. It is to be hoped that their energy in the publishing business may prove as profitable to them as it is to the public.

THE CATECHISM TESTED BY THE BIBLE. — Rev. A. R. Baker, of Medford, has prepared under this title, a most elaborate "question-book on the topics in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism; for families, Sabbath Schools, Bible-classes, and Churches." The first volume is devoted to the *thirty-eight* doctrinal questions in the Catechism. The second volume, which is rather larger, is occupied with the *sixty-nine* practical questions. The two volumes may be had bound in one, making a neat little volume of nearly three hundred pages. After a thorough examination of the work, we can pronounce it as orthodox as the Catechism itself, which is inferior in orthodoxy to no book but the Bible alone. That admirable "form of sound words" is thoroughly "tested" by a rigid analysis of it into all its parts, and an application to each of them of the Scripture testimony on the subject. The author appears to understand well the use of the proper helps to his undertaking; and he may say with Ralph Cudworth: "For our parts, we neither call philology, nor yet philosophy, our mistress, but serve ourselves of either as occasion requireth." As a favorable specimen of the method of the book, we would refer to the tenth lesson in the first volume, on the doctrine of the Trinity. We know not how the young, or the old, can obtain the unspeakable benefit of a full Christian indoctrination, better than by a careful study of Mr. Baker's book. This mode of instruction has always stood in high favor with the best and ablest divines in every age. "Though sermons," says Thomas Fuller, "give the most sail to men's souls, catechising layeth the best ballast in them, keeping them steady from being carried away with every wind of doctrine."

While we are upon the Assembly's Catechism, of which, within a few years, it is known that more than a million of copies have been

Digitized by Google

put into circulation in our own country, we would say a word on a kindred subject; — we mean the New England Primer. And this we do, because a very large proportion of the recent issues of the Catechism is in reprints of the Primer, which is chiefly reprinted on account of this part of its contents. One "Antiquary" has been giving a series of criticisms on the Primer, in the "Cambridge Chronicle." He shews that we are ignorant of its author, and of the date of its first publication; that no copy of the earliest editions is known to be extant; and that, in various editions, down to our own times, it has suffered numerous alterations, most of them for the worse, and many of them wholly unjustifiable. There is hardly any of its contents which has not been tampered with, except the "Shorter Catechism." We have not the room for a few strictures to which "Antiquary" has made himself liable. But we would suggest to the Publishing Committee of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, — a committee which has several competent antiquarians in its number, to collate all the best editions of the New England Primer they can find, and to publish a carefully revised edition, with brief annotations where necessary.

To return to our text, we would "just add by way of application," that we learn with much pleasure that a large impression of Mr. Baker's volumes has gone off with great rapidity, and that a stereotyped edition is to be prepared with all possible despatch, by John P. Jewett, of this city.

An Address to the Suffolk North Association of Congregational Ministers. — In looking over this book, written by J. P. Lesley, and its appended sermons, our eye fell on these words, P. 128: "And very little foxes, and very small fire-brands will serve the enemy's purpose." The author of this book, and the pastor of the Unitarian Church in Charlestown, by means of this book between them, seem to have set the standing corn of the Philistines on fire in one spot. At the recent meeting of the American Unitarian Association, the minister referred to, spoke of this book; and said that this and one or two other publications, naming them, had "mapped out work enough to last his Orthodox friends through summer and dog-days, at least." The book has rekindled the animosities of such men as the gentleman above named; but we presume that no member of the Suffolk North Association will put pen to paper about it. The author applied to that body for licensure. They were unwilling to grant his request. He therefore became convinced that ministerial associations are dangerous to the peace and liberties of the churches. Had the "village Hampden" been silenced by courtly favors, the cause of liberty might have suffered greatly. Had Mr. Lesley been admitted to the Association at his request, the churches would never have known what they had lost; any more than we now think they will appreciate his pure and disinterested zeal in the cause of religious liberty. This book is noticeable only in view of the rancor in the bosoms of certain men towards orthodox men and things, which finds vent when any one, professedly of our household, proves a foe to us. As for those Unitarians who exult at such a book as this, we would

Digitized by Google

only remind them that, had they earlier adopted the plan which now seems to be gaining favor with them, of making test acts, and had taken the bold and manly stand of our Suffolk North Association, in repudiating heretical men, while they might have been abused for it, they would have saved themselves much trouble. As to the Association, we thank them for the service done to the churches by their independent action. As to the church in Milton, we mourn that such a man should, in any way, have been imposed upon them. As to Mr. Lesley, we have no rod in our *fasces* small enough to give him a chastisement which would not be more than his imbecility could endure.

ANNALS OF SALEM. — Rev. Mr. Felt, who four years ago gave us the first volume of the second edition of his annals of the City of Peace, has, at last, afforded us the other volume. It is, what it purports to be, a collection of annals, giving us the successive years of that ancient and honorable place, in reference to whose Indian name, Nahumkeek, Cotton Mather says that he has "somewhere met with an odd observation, that the name of it was rather Hebrew, than Indian; for *nahum* signifies *comfort*, and *keek* signifies an *haven;* and our English not only found it an Haven of Comfort, but happened also to put another Hebrew name upon it; for they called it *Salem*, for the *peace* which they had and hoped in it; and so it is called unto this day." Mr. Felt's accumulations, collected with such indefatigable research and scrupulous fidelity, will oblige all the future constructors of New England history to become his debtors. They will find themselves heavily in his books; for they will have to bring much of their building material from his well-stocked lumber-yard, where is gathered all that modern industry can obtain from the ancient forests of our colonial history.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS HOOKER. — This is the sixth volume of the biographical series, issued by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society under the general title, "Lives of the Chief Fathers of New England." Inasmuch as four of these six volumes were written by three of the editors of this work, we are precluded from speaking so freely of the series, as might otherwise be expected. But of this particular volume we can frankly speak, as one whose author is a worthy descendant of its subject. Dr. Hooker, with true filial piety, not to say an almost Chinese idolatry of parentage, has collected and enbalmed every remaining relic of his famous ancestor, the founder of Hartford church and town. If there is any thing on his pages at which we might take exception, it is the precedence which seems to be assigned to Thomas Hooker over John Cotton. We suppose, however, that every one must be allowed to hurrah for his own hero; and we consent that "our brethren at the Connecticut" should exalt their venerated Hooker and Davenport with whatever notes of pre-eminence they please, provided only they do not insist that "we of the Bay" should add our unqualified "Amen." — Thomas Hooker, in one respect, is entitled to stand one of the first among the "chief fathers;" his descendants being very numerous, and many of them highly distinguished for usefulness and honor. More than forty of them,

Digitized by Google

including Presidents Edwards, Dwight, and Woolsey, are on the rolls of the Christian ministry; as many of his female descendants have intermarried with clergymen; and numerous others have served the public in stations of high trust and honor. And so, between the progenitor and his progeny, it is proved out and out, that "children's children are the crown of old men, and the glory of children are their fathers."

A PILGRIM OF NINETY YEARS. — Such was Mrs. Abigail Bailey, of whom a memoir has just appeared, written by Rev. D. O. Morton, and published by the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society. By common consent, ministers' wives are expected to be pattern women; and this "mother in Israel," who, like her namesake, the spouse of David, "was a woman of good understanding," may serve as a pattern to other ladies who are wedded to the reverend clergy. Though of slender constitution, and sorely shaken by sickness in early days, Mrs. Bailey lived, through a laborious and useful life, to a good old age, and a triumphant death. This reminds us of a passage in the diary of Rev. Michael Wigglesworth, the ancient pastor of Malden. It is dated June 20th, 1652, when he was about one and twenty years old, and was a tutor in Harvard College. "In our President's (Henry Dunster's) exposition (in the College-Hall,) I found sweet encouragement in regard of my bodily weakness, occasionally fetched from that passage, Isai. xl. 30, 31: 'It may be thou art sickly. Why, the Lord is thy Physician, who healeth thee. He can make thee strong in thy age, though thou be weakly in thy youth.'"

THE GOOD AND THE BAD IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. — Had the writer of this tract lived in the old struggle between Christianity and Paganism, when the latter had all the antiquity, architecture, sculpture, and music, on its side, as well as all the priestly splendor, and vestal virginity, and all the deep sincerity of superstitious ignorance, he would have penned just such a treatise, gravely setting forth "the good and the bad," of Paganism; and asking with wiseacre solemnity, Whether Paganism "is to be destroyed or reformed?" He seems to have gone abroad on his travels, a stiff young Protestant. But he is destined to become a warning to all well-meaning sophomores just starting to see the world. He soon beholds and hears some things that are new to him, whereupon he at once finds out the narrowness of his honest old home-bred "Yankee notions." As jugs are easiest carried about by the ears, so he is carried captive by the sweet chants of caged-up nuns. He becomes a vessel "with the handle all on the other side." Oh, those Gregorian chants, that warbling sanctity, that evening hymn at the Convent of Trinita dei Monti! "It seems as if some choir of the blessed were chanting a celestial hymn; as if that tender and plaintive melody, which comes to bear up his soul from gloom, were the distant music of angels." Poor soul, he little thinks that if those pining girls sang as they felt, they would be iterating the melancholy cry of Sterne's starling: "I can't get out! I can't get out!" He is now ready to discover that even monkery is a holy and a lovely thing;

Digitized by Google

and has his sentimental raptures about "the lonely imprisoned cell," which we take to be a cell shut up all by itself within another cell. His ideas take a wonderful expansion. His soul grows too big to contain itself; and he issues a pamphlet to persuade the Pope and his crew to give up some of their nonsense; and to persuade the Protestant world to fall in love with the "sisters of charity," and to make "a Jacob's ladder" of the sign of the cross. If this gentleman, (we will do him the kindness not to repeat his name,) after writing his pamphlet, had sealed up the manuscript in a bottle for "nine years," and then read it in soberer mood. he would have been enraged at himself for scribbling this "letter from Rome." As it is, he must get off some more folly of the same sort, to back up what he has now promulged; or he must, like a true penitent, confess and deplore his inexcusable bewilderment; or, which is more probable, he will keep himself quiet, in hopes that this act of indiscretion will shortly be forgiven, and soon after forgotten.

CELEBRATIONS. — The disposition to notice the anniversaries of important events is becoming very strong in New England. Not only such as are of general interest to the whole people, but such as have a restricted and local interest, are often observed with surprising spirit and enthusiasm. Thus the century during which a town has existed, or the half century of a pastor's ministrations, will be observed with a vehemence of zeal scarcely known out of New England. Within a month, one of each has been observed in this vicinity. On the 23d of May, the town of Malden, at an expense of several thousand dollars, freely expended by the ardor of its citizens, celebrated the two hundred years since, by votes of the Great and General Court, "Mysticke-side men were set off into a town by themselves, to be called Mauldon." The events of that day will long be remembered on the beautiful spot where they took place. Temperance, order, and harmony of feeling, combined with an intense excitement, and almost extravagant exultation, resulted in a day which leaves behind it, none but the most pleasing remembrances.

The other celebration to which we allude, was that of the half-century of the Senior pastor of Wrentham, which was observed in that place, with high satisfaction, on the 12th of June. The venerable Elisha Fisk preached in the pulpit, whence he had dispensed the gospel for a thirty-sixth part of the time since the gospel began to be proclaimed at all. Thirty-six such links in the chain would make a fine "apostolical succession." The good patriarch well magnified his office, which, as John Newton used to say, "is the worst of all trades, but the best of all professions." He seems likely to obtain the wish of Augustine, who often desired that Christ, when he came, might find him "aut precantem, aut predicantem," — either praying or preaching. His example rebukes those many pastors, "who too slightly and suddenly quit what they had before so seriously and solemnly accepted; as if their pastoral charges were, like their upper garments, to be put off at pleasure, to cool themselves in every heat of passion." And no less does the example of his flock, united, tranquil, and prosperous, through his pastorate of fifty years, reprove

Digitized by Google

those parishes which distract themselves with frequent mutations of their spiritual guides, and which seem "to nothing fixed, but love of change." When we consider the ordinary uncertainty of health and life, and how much this uncertainty is enhanced by the exhausting nature of faithful ministerial labor, we shall not deem it strange that there should be but eight pastors in all Massachusetts who have survived to preach on the fiftieth anniversary of their ordination. Besides this, one half of the Orthodox churches in this State have been organized within five and twenty years; and many more were not in existence fifty years ago. Ministers of the gospel are the cheapest and pleasantest conservatives of social order. If they be not the guardians of public morals, then magistrates must be. The people must choose between pastors with their deacons, and lawyers with their deputy-sheriffs. Hence we regard a celebration like that at Wrentham, as an event of real importance to the political scholar; while such as that at Malden claims the attention of the student in the philosophy of history.

ORDINATIONS.

Apr. 11. Mr. William Olmstead, Mason Village, N. H.
May 1. Mr. Charles A. Downes, Evangelist, Pembroke, N. H.
" 16. Mr. John Merrill, Sedgwick Village, Me.
" 17. Mr. William L Hyde, Gardiner Village, Me.
" " Mr. William Clarke, Orford West, N. H.
" " Mr. Edwin R. Hodgman, Evangelist, Orford West.
" 25. Mr. Isaac Wethrell, North Chelsea, Ms.
June 14. Mr. George Gannett, Boothbay Harbor, Me.

INSTALLATIONS.

Mar. 21. Rev. Matthew D. Gordon, Hollis, N. H.
" 29. Rev. Silas Aiken, Rutland, Vt.
Apr. 19. Rev. W. B. Hammond, South Braintree, Ms.
" 25. Rev. J. H. Pettingill, Second Church, Saybrook, Con.
May 9. Rev. Joseph D. Hull, Plymouth Hollow, Con.
" 16. Rev. S. S. Drake, Biddeford, Me.
" 17. Rev. Stillman Pratt, Melrose Church, Malden, Ms.
June 6. Rev. Joshua L. Tucker, Holliston, Ms.
" 7. Rev. Joseph H. Beckwith, Middleton, Vt.
" " Rev. B. F. Clarke, Rowe, Ms.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Apr. 24. Rev. Benjamin Wood, Upton, Ms., æ. 76.
" 25. Rev. Hezekiah Packard, D. D., Salem, æ. 87.
May 9. Rev. Moses Elliot, Boscawen, N. H., æ. 74.
" 10. Rev. Malachi Bullard, Jr., Winchendon, Ms., æ. 32.
" 11. Rev. Jason Park, Barry, Jackson Co., Mich., æ. 70.
June 9. Rev. Sylvester Dana, Concord, N. H., æ. 79.
" 19. Rev. William B. Tappan, Grantville, Ms., æ. 54.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE,
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] AUGUST, 1849. [No. 8.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALEXO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ARMER HOBBS, PRINTER, 27 CORNHILL.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Ignatius Loyola,	349
Forsaking All for Christ,	356
Review: James's Earnest Ministry, Spring's Power of the Pulpit,	363
Review: Morell's Philosophy of Religion,	370
God Known by His Judgments,	377
Ministerial Associations,	389
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Creeds Returning into Fashion,	392
Dr. Jewett's Lectures and Writings,	394
Dr. Pond's Review of Dr. Bushnell,	394
Ancient and Modern Orthodoxy,	395
Ecclesiastical Lists,	396

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

A large extra edition of the June number of the Christian Observatory has been struck off. It contains a searching and thorough review of Dr. Bushnell's recent work, occupying sixty pages.

Booksellers and others will be supplied on moderate terms for cash.

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office six dollars, shall receive four copies of the Christian Observatory for 1849.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

1848, Sept. 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. AUGUST, 1849. No. 8.

IGNATIUS LOYOLA.

AT the close of the fifteenth century, the "man of sin" seemed destined to a complete overthrow, by the labors of Martin Luther and his associates. An open Bible, and civil and religious freedom went abroad in company; state after state threw off their allegiance to the Papal church, and Papacy herself shunned the eye of man. Many thought the hour had arrived, in which the Lord would destroy the "mystery of iniquity" by the "breath of his mouth," and the "brightness of his coming."

When all seemed lost to Rome, and opposition arose on every side, an order of men appeared, zealous, severe, and indomitable; who threw themselves at the Pontiff's feet, ready to do his will, without reserve or reward. The founder of this new order was Ignatius Loyola, whose history we propose to sketch.

Loyola was born in the old castle of Loyola, in Biscay, Spain, in 1491, — eight years after the death of Luther. His father was a Spanish nobleman, who introduced him at an early age, and in the character of a page, to the Court of Ferdinand, surnamed the Catholic. The court of a King not suiting his restless nature, he was soon transferred to the army. He rose rapidly. Glory and gallantry were his ruling passions, and he was distinguished for his bravery and his vices.

At the siege of Pampeluna, by the French, he was wounded in both his legs. An incompetent person having set them badly, he had them broken again, that the work might be better done. His friends attest, that St. Peter himself became his surgeon on the second trial. If so, the sequel shews that Peter was

Digitized by Google

not very competent to set broken limbs, how well soever he might do other things. The work was so unskilfully done, that the bone protruded, and the limb was shrunk, shortened, and crooked. To restore the fair proportions of the limb, he was literally stretched on a rack, hoping again to become the champion in knightly combat. But it was all in vain, and he was doomed to be a cripple for life.

As he lay upon his couch of sickness and pain, he read the lives of St. Francis and St. Dominic. More than all the others, he read the "Flower of the Saints," a book full of the most extravagant tales of men who founded new orders to serve the church, and were canonized and adored, — who wandered about without food, and without clothes,— who girded their loins with iron chains,— who toiled, suffered, and died for the church,— who dwelt far away from human habitations, in horrid dens, or in caverns dark and drear.

New visions arose before the mind of Loyola. All was not lost to him. He could be a knight and cavalier still. He could be the champion of the church, and throw his shield over a dishonored religion, and bathe his sword in the blood of her foes. He could found an order such as the world had never seen; and reach the highest position in the church by suffering and sorrows, which would cause Dominic and Francis to be forgotten. He would be canonized and worshipped in the church through all coming time. Around his banner none should gather, who were not willing to share his disgrace and toil; and all such should participate in his triumph and fame.

Loyola arose from his couch to execute his purpose. He sought the church of "Mary, the mother of the Lord," and before her image hung up his lance and shield. His knightly robes were exchanged for a beggar's garb, which he lined with thorns; and so departed, to consecrate his days to the church.

In a Dominican cell, not far from Montserrat, the foundation of the order was laid. He began a personal consecration of himself to the great work on which he was to enter, devoting three entire days to fasting, and general confession of his past life. From Sabbath to Sabbath he lived without food. He constantly arose at midnight, and passed seven hours, kneeling on the cold stones. Three times each day he scourged himself till the blood came. He refused to eat his meals, to comb his hair, or cut his nails.

Digitized by Google

He appeared in the presence of those who had known him in his palmiest days, a cripple and a beggar, steeped in filth, and clothed in rags. Sometimes he was in rapture, and often apparently in despair. Sometimes his joy was ecstatic; and often he would rend the air with wailings, from self-inflicted torture. He fasted to the very verge of starvation, till his confessor bade him fast no more; and as obedience was to be the cardinal doctrine of the new order, the penitent submitted at once. He lay in a trance for eight days, and was supposed to be dead; and they were about to prepare him for burial. Recovering from the trance, he assumed the attitude and aspect of an idiot; and becoming too loathsome and offensive to dwell with men, fled from human society into the desert.

Near Mamesa, is a cave hewn out of a rock, and more like a sepulchre than a human habitation. It was the cradle of Loyola's "Christian infancy," as his eulogists inform us. Here, for ten months, he maintained a conflict with the devil. At length his friends had compassion, and brought him out of that horrid den. The fever was still upon him; but his insane ravings were carefully written down as inspired words. The distinguished lady to whom he had devoted his life, at length took pity on her devotee; and Mary appeared to him in person. She allowed him to see her son, Jesus Christ, face to face. She permitted him to see transubstantiation take place in the sacrifice of the Mass. She led him to the steps of the church of St. Dominic, and shewed him the "Trinity in Unity," on which he looked with his bodily eyes, "and wept with joy and wonder."

The Convent of the Theatines, one of the severest orders of that day, was chosen by Loyola as his abode. He tended the sick, went about in rags, flogged himself daily, and disfigured his person. He would often leave the convent, and run hooting into the street; or, mounting a pile of stones, would wave his hat to collect an audience, and preach with great vehemence and power. The discipline of the Theatines, was too tame and feeble for Loyola, who resolved to go to Rome, and he performed the journey on foot, amid great privations and suffering. He was supposed to have the plague, or to be just recovering from that disease; was seldom allowed to enter a house, or even lodge within the walls of a city. Most of the nights were passed in the open air, and upon the cold ground. Arriving at Rome, at last, obscure

Digitized by Google

and without introduction, he bowed before Adrian VI., kissed his feet, obtained his blessing, and went out from the presence of the Pope to begin his work. His activity, zeal, and determination bore down all opposition; and his friends multiplied daily. It would be difficult to follow his restless career. At one time he was found in the Syrian desert, at another, in the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, and then in France or Spain; and in all places astonishing the world with his penances, vigils, and sufferings.

To attain the position he resolved to occupy, a better education was needed. He entered the college, at Barcelona; placed himself under the rules of the institution, at the age of thirty-three years; and begged, as a favor, that the tutors would flog him as "they would any boy." He attempted, while in college, to reform the females in the Convent of St. Agnes; but was bastinadoed, and stabbed, and left for dead.

The hour for action had, at last, arrived. To found an order, such as he resolved to found, Loyola must become notorious, and must exceed both St. Dominic and St. Francis. He had done all this, and the world was full of his fame. He had only to choose his associates, and set out on his mission. At Paris, Loyola met two persons, fit to be his associates, and companions in toil,— Faber, a Savoyard, and Xavier, a Navarrese. The latter was a noble youth of an ancient house. These companions in study, became the disciples of Loyola. His mode of making converts was novel, and gave assurance that all such would be true men. To show a libertine how one could conquer the passions when so disposed, he stood for a time, immersed to the neck, in a pool of frozen water. He would play at billiards with a gambler, on condition that, if the gambler lost the game, he should agonize a month with him. The timid, the confident, the gay, the ardent, were drawn to his standard. To Xavier he imparted his own spirit, and made both Faber and Xavier the confidants of all his emotions. They dwelt in a single cell, and exercised over each other a vigilant watch. Loyola granted his two disciples no indulgence or relaxation; but in the coldest weather, exacted of them all their vigils and fasts. His own countenance was haggard in the extreme. His flagellation was cruel, his diet sordid, his person filthy, his body lacerated and bleeding.

In the church of Mont-Martre, six persons met to organize their band, and take upon themselves, the vows of the holy order.

Digitized by Google

They bound themselves to poverty and chastity, agreed upon uniform rules of life, and became soldiers to war on the kingdom of Satan. Their "Captain was Jesus Christ," and they were the "company or army of Jesus." These vows were registered, and the Jesuits started for Rome. But all doors in that city, were closed against them. Nothing daunted, they began their work; tended the sick, preached, fasted, and mingled with the poor; and thus gained a hearing among the people.

The restless zeal of Loyola, which carried all before it, attracted the attention of the Pontiff, who called the band into his presence. It was a difficult matter to obtain for their plan, the Papal sanction. The misconduct of the religious orders, already in existence, had brought upon the Pope all his troubles. It seemed bad policy to create a new order, whose General would be a formidable rival to the Pontiff himself. The regular clergy opposed the rising sect. It was universally unpopular. The wits, the reformers, and the Vatican itself opposed it. For three years, the company of Jesuits, waited to be acknowledged by the Church. At length, to the vows of chastity and poverty, the vow of obedience was added, pledging them to do all that the Pope might command, and to go wherever he bade them, "*without discussion, condition, or reward.*" This vow having been taken, a partial sanction was obtained in 1540, limiting the order to sixty members. In 1543, all restriction was removed, and the order left to the guidance of its own official head. The original six members met in 1541, to elect a leader, and Loyola was unanimously chosen General of the order of Jesus. Obedience was its watchword. It was to go into all places and localities, assume all disguises, and become seemingly Turk, pagan, or heretic, as the General might direct.

The order of Jesuits now spread with the power of thought, out-running and out-doing all others. When one of them filled the pulpit, no church could hold the people. They became tutors to the young, and saw that the rising generation were allies of the church. No time was lost in contending for what was non-essential; but, letting all minor things alone, they seized what was influential and permanent. Loyola breathed into the order, which was free from all law but his own, a large portion of his own indomitable zeal. The discipline was stern and exact, and the police was the most perfect the world ever saw. The leader, and the society, were distinguished by dauntless courage, vehement

Digitized by Google

zeal, self-denial which sundered each social and domestic tie, and an unscrupulous daring. No rude familiarity, and no disobedience to rules, were permitted. No toil or enterprise, low or lofty, was rejected; and no feeble-minded person was admitted. No one who had worn the badge of any other order could become one of the "company of Jesus," though it had been born but a day. The order rose at once to the full measure of its gigantic power, obtaining possession of the universal mind, and controlling the pulpit, the confessional, and the school. The members became confessors to kings, princes, and statesmen; and held the state secrets of half the globe. They assumed all garbs, were scholars, merchants, nobles, mendicants, or servants; were deaf, dumb, blind, or halt, as circumstances demanded.

By forged letters they entered hostile countries; became pages and menials, to obtain information; and acted as spies, or assassins. At the command of the General, they braved pestilence, met hunger and need, and laid down in palaces or dungeons. They were found in the mines at Peru, in the Spice Islands, at the slave-marts in Africa, or in the observatories at China. They plotted against the thrones of hostile kings, spread evil rumors, and raised tumults; inflamed civil war, and armed and aimed the hand of the assassin. They had one aim,— the dominion of the Romish church; — one motto, the end sanctifies the means; — one principle, the church can do no wrong. Like locusts, they went forth in bands; and no place escaped them. They tracked commerce round the globe; and where neither ambition, nor love of gain ever led men, the Jesuits were found. The vulgar and the polite, the learned and the rude, the visionary and the fanatic, all were used, and all were useful. Brazil, Japan, the East Indies, and Ethiopia, bowed at the mandate of Loyola, no less than Paris or Rome.

Before his death, Loyola saw more than his ardent imagination had dared to conceive. In sixteen years he had created twelve Jesuit provinces, formed more than one hundred houses, and numbered followers by thousands. He was adored and feared. The very house in which he dwelt, was so sacred in popular estimation, that it trembled if an impure person approached. His zeal and austerities continued through life. He performed the meanest offices of the order, taught little children to read, visited the common people, collected alms for the Jews, and was gentle

Digitized by Google

and forbearing to all but his disciples. He dwelt in a convent, and lived in a simple and unostentatious style. The devout sought him as a guide, the wise as an instructor, and the rulers as a counsellor. His was a master spirit; men and nations bowed to its dictates; and even the imperious Paul IV. quailed before it.

In the monastery of St. Ignatius de Loyola, there hangs a portrait of this remarkable man. He is represented as a handsome person, about forty-five years of age, with a bearing that bespeaks the consciousness of independence, and noble descent; and having a "cane-colored" beard, pale countenance, and blue eyes, singularly mild. Neither eye nor mouth indicate those strong passions which marked his character. The licentiousness of the soldier, the craft of the priest, the duplicity of the statesman, are all veiled under a calm serenity of countenance that defies scrutiny. Few would recognise the man of gigantic talents and profound sagacity, with a mind of the most heroic order; and who was one of the ablest generals ever known. To the last he was a General whose authority none dared to question; who made laws and gave orders, which none disputed or disobeyed.

In a lowly chamber of the monastery of St. Ignatius, in the town of Ascoytia, Loyola gathered around him his college; and from his dying bed named his successor, Iago Laynos. Paul IV. prohibited the election unless certain conditions were complied with; but the order trampled the conditions under foot, and ratified the election by acclamation. Loyola's work was done. In a splendid chamber, now brilliant with gold and jewels, of that monastery, once the head-quarters of the order of Jesuits, the stranger is pointed to the spot where St. Ignatius breathed his last.

He closed his mortal career in July, 1556, at the age of sixty-five years, and thirty-six years subsequent to his wounds at Pampeluna. He was exhausted by labors, and worn out by fatigues and sufferings. Forty-three years after his death, he was canonized as St. Ignatius, by Gregory XV.; and his feast-day falls on the thirty-first day of July.

"The stranger in Rome will observe two princely temples, rich with paintings and marbles, which commemorate his great services to the Roman see. In one of them stands his statue of massive silver; and his bones, enshrined amid jewels, are placed beneath the altar of daily sacrifice."

Digitized by Google

FORSAKING ALL FOR CHRIST.

DISCRIMINATING views in respect to the Christian life, and the nature and extent of the sacrifices which it demands, are requisite to an elevated piety. As streams never rise higher than their fountains, so the character and conduct of men will never transcend their ideal of the Christian life. Nay, their actual attainments always fall below their standard of duty.

Even when their conceptions correspond to the Bible rule, their lives will exhibit many deficiencies. But if that rule be depressed, and their ideal conceptions of the Christian life become low, their piety will exhibit a corresponding deterioration. It is exceedingly important, therefore, that our standard of duty be high, that our aims may also be high. And yet there is a strong propensity, even among Christians, to explain away the strictness of Scripture commands, and thus bring down the Bible standard of duty, so as to meet their own low attainments or render their deficiencies the less glaring. It is believed that a very important lesson is yet to be learned by the great body of believers, in respect to the extent of those sacrifices demanded of them as conditions of discipleship. On this subject, the views of the great mass of Church members are as yet altogether too low. And until more enlarged and enlightened views are entertained, we have little reason to anticipate any marked acceleration in the great benevolent movements of the age. Before the great work of evangelizing the world, shall proceed with that rapidity of movement which the Bible authorizes us to anticipate, and which is necessary to the fulfilment of prophecy, Christians as a body, must come up to a higher platform; and exhibit a higher order of piety. Their standard of duty must be greatly elevated; and a spirit of self-sacrifice, such as has hitherto burned only in the hearts of the few who have shone as lights in the world, must be infused into the mass.

Our Saviour said to his disciples: "*Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*" What is meant by this language? What is it to forsake all that one has? If this is an indispensable condition of discipleship, in default of which, no one can be a true disciple of Jesus, it is a matter of deep personal interest for us to know the exact

Digitized by Google

meaning of our Saviour, and what is the extent of sacrifice we are required to make.

That all are required *literally* and *openly* to forsake home, friends, possessions, and common occupations; and set out on a mission of mercy, as a condition of discipleship, will not be maintained. The first disciples were required to do as much as this. They did it. They forsook all, and literally followed the Saviour, that they might receive his instructions, and thus be prepared to go out as appointed teachers of his gospel. In its application to them, the language of our Saviour admits of a literal interpretation.

And Christians among us, in sufficient numbers to meet the demands of Foreign Missions, are required thus to forsake every thing. Home, with its endearments, kindred, friends, society, and prospects of earthly gain, — all are to be parted with, and left behind.

But the great mass of Christians may still abide at their homes, taste the sweets of domestic life and social converse, pursue their accustomed lawful callings, and hold the control of their possessions. Still, there is a sense in which they are to forsake all. If there is not a literal, there must be a spiritual forsaking of all worldly objects, and worldly pursuits. That is, all these must be subordinated to the higher claims of God. Our wills must yield to, and coalesce in, the will of God. Christ must hold the first place in our hearts; and our time, talents, acquisitions, influences, and possessions, must be yielded up, and consecrated to him. This consecration must be unconditional, both as regards objects, and time. It must embrace every thing, and extend to all coming time. Nothing short of an entire subjection of the heart, and the will, a readiness to be, to do, and to suffer, any thing which God may see fit to appoint, meets the demand that is laid upon us. Until we thus sign a quitclaim in favor of Christ, to all we have, actually holding all in subordination to his will, and disposing of the same, in the manner he desires, it cannot be said of us, that we have "forsaken all for Christ."

The first disciples forsook all, not only in *heart*, but in *fact*. By their profession of Christianity they dispossessed themselves of their earthly inheritances, and subjected themselves to all manner of sufferings, perilling even their lives. But only on condition of this, would Jesus own them as his disciples. "If any man

Digitized by Google

come to me, and hateth not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." What can this language indicate, unless it be, that such unqualified consecration to God, is indispensable to discipleship? And can we suppose that the terms of discipleship are not the same in all ages? Has there been a letting down of the conditions? Is less demanded of Christians now than formerly? Are they not required to be as devoted and self-denying now, as then? As light increases, and opportunities multiply, may Christians be less active? Away with such a thought! The Christian spirit, and the terms of discipleship, are ever the same. And though, in this land of freedom, and of law, we are not subjected to sufferings the same in kind with those of the disciples in Judea, are we not bound to have the same spirit?

God calls his people to bear testimony for him in different ways, at different times. In one age, the special office of Christians is, to stand up and face opposition and danger. By simply refusing to abjure their faith, they are to open the door of a prison, or kindle the flame of martyrdom, for themselves. At another period their principal work is, laying the foundations of society, and of a new government, — as the Pilgrims did in this country. At another time, their work becomes more aggressive, and consists in carrying the conquest into the territories of the enemy, by means of Missions. The providence of God indicates to Christians, at different periods, the special work to which they are appointed. Say not then, Christian reader, that because the days of persecution and martyrdom are past, you have nothing to do, and no sacrifices to make. Say not, that because the foundations of society around you, are already laid, you may sit down in quietness and ease. If you are a disciple of Jesus, he has called you as a *laborer* into his vineyard. In his hive there are to be no drones, to consume the honey, while they add nothing to the store.

Christ denominates his disciples, "servants," "soldiers," "wrestlers," "racers," — appellations indicative of toil. When he calls one to his service, his language is, "Son, go *work* to-day in my vineyard." A world still lying in wickedness, spreads itself out before us, as the field. In every part of it there

Digitized by Google

is work enough for the united energies of the people of God. The great problem to be solved is, the salvation of this world through the instrumentality of the truth. The gospel is to be preached to all nations. This is a work committed to the people of God, in which they are bound to share equally,—that is, according to their several ability. In some way, every Christian is to coöperate therein.

Here then is the theatre, on which we are to manifest our benevolence. To the accomplishment of this great work all our powers and possessions are to be devoted. This should be the all-absorbing object, to which every other is kept subordinate.

When, therefore, you have laid yourself, your friends, your influence, your talents, and possessions, upon the altar of Christ, willing that all shall be disposed of in the very manner which he chooses irrespective of your own choice, then, and not till then, have you forsaken all for Christ. Then, and not till then, does the Bible allow you to class yourself among the disciples of Jesus. Unless this unqualified surrender has been made, whatever may be your hopes of heaven, they are vain, and will disappoint you at the last day.

Do you say that this is a great sacrifice? Yes; but Christians must make great sacrifices. This they must expect. Our Saviour gives them to understand this, and admonishes them to "count the cost." The spirit of the gospel is a self-sacrificing spirit. But does Christ demand more of his disciples than he has done for them? What greater sacrifice could he make than he has already made? Sharing equal glory with the Eternal Father, he laid that glory by, and condescended to become a man; experienced the infirmities and sufferings of men; passed a life of poverty and reproach, and closed the same, by submitting to a most cruel and ignominious death. And all this for what? For the benefit of others, and those his enemies. His whole life was a practical demonstration of the truth, that "he pleased not himself." Indifferent to the honors and pleasures of the world, he went about on his errand of mercy, a poor sojourner, having no property, no home, not even "a place to lay his head." Such was "the spirit of Christ;" and "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Who, then, you are ready to exclaim, can be saved? And we respond: Aye, who *can* be saved?

Digitized by Google

When we see a man like Henry Martyn, of brilliant talents, finished education, and polished manners, bidding fair to reach the highest summit of earthly fame, with every prospect of ease and comfort before him, strongly attached to friends, and home, and refined society; and when we see him turning his back upon all these, bidding farewell to fame, country, and friends, sundering the tenderest tie which affection knows, and with a tearful eye, and a heaving bosom, embarking for a distant land, never more to return, but to wear out his life among degraded heathen, and leave his bones upon pagan soil, we think that *he* is a true disciple of Jesus; for, like his Master, he "forsook all that he had," and he had much.

Now, though it may not be our duty, to go personally to the heathen, are we not bound to feel the same interest in them which he felt? Are we not required to exercise the same self-renouncing spirit? And to be just as willing as he was, to devote ourselves, in some way, to the advancement of Christ's Kingdom in the world? And if we have not this spirit, what encouragement can we gather from the Bible, that we are the disciples of Jesus?

We hold it to be the duty of every one, on entering the Christian life, after considering his own talents, and the circumstances in which Providence has placed him, honestly to inquire of himself, "In what sphere of action, and by what course of means may I reasonably hope to be most useful to men, and most subservient to God's glory?" And whatever path, in this view opens before him, whether thorny or smooth, he is bound to enter. His own preferences, and ease, and advantage are to be laid out of the question. If he have talents and education which render it probable that he can accomplish more good by ministering at the altar, than in any other way, however fearful the responsibility, and onerous the duties of the office, "necessity is laid upon him," "yea, woe is him if he preach not the gospel." To the inviting prospect held out by other more lucrative professions he is bound to close his eyes. And if circumstances, and a peculiar fitness in himself for missionary labor, indicate the will of God, that he "depart hence to the Gentiles," that summons must be obeyed. Nor has he forsaken all till it be done.

It is not the duty of all to become ministers of the gospel, or missionaries to the heathen. All are neither qualified or needed for this work. It is unquestionably the will of God that a large

Digitized by Google

part of the church should serve him in other callings. Some are needed to be teachers of youth, some for writing books, some for the mechanic arts, some for tilling the soil, and some to navigate the seas. All these departments of labor are to be filled. And Christians may serve God, in any of these callings, as truly as in the pulpit, or on missionary ground.

But in order to this, they must enter upon their labors with the same feelings as the true minister of the gospel, and the missionary; — that is, with the conviction that their powers and energies belong to God, and that the results of their labor, of whatever kind it may be, beyond the supply of their own wants, are to be appropriated to the great work of saving the world.

The impression is quite too common among Christians, that the principal responsibility of converting the world, rests upon ministers, who are bound to be contented with a bare subsistence, and devote all their energies to the one great business of saving souls. At the least discovery of covetousness in them, the world is shocked. For a minister or missionary to live in splendor, would be regarded as a crime. The common sentiment of the church is, that ministers and missionaries must be dead to the world, and wholly devoted to God.

Now we complain not, at the demand made upon the ministry. The standard proposed for them, and by which they are judged, is not too high. Too much is not expected or demanded of them. But are not all Christians bound to come up to the same high ground? Where is the authority for erecting one standard for the minister and the missionary, and another for the people? Does the Bible make any such distinction? The command, "Go teach all nations," rests with equal force upon the laity, as upon the ministry. If you judge that you can serve God more effectually by tilling the soil, or working at the bench, or standing behind the counter, than by preaching the gospel, do so. But be sure you serve God, and not yourself. Choosing one or another profession, does not release you from responsibility. The same obligation will follow you, wherever you go, in whatever pursuits you engage.

If you may not preach the gospel yourself, you may labor with your hands, and help to support those who can. Though unqualified for missionary labor, you may assist in feeding and clothing those who are qualified. You may aid in furnishing Bibles, and

Digitized by Google

presses, and other materials for missionary effort. And this you are bound to do, to the extent of sacrifice which is made by the missionary himself. And if he cannot be said to forsake all till he has given himself, neither can you, till you have given at least your property.

Does anything short of what has been described, come up to the idea of forsaking all for Christ? Have we raised the standard of duty too high? Have we raised it higher than that designated by the Bible? No! will be the answer of every honest believer.

Then, Christian reader, permit us to ask, Have *you* thus forsaken all? Has the Saviour witnessed your unconditional surrender of yourself and your all to him? Have you in good faith laid your talents, influence, acquisitions, and possessions, upon the altar of God, to be used for his glory, and only as he shall direct? If not, your hopes of discipleship are vain. You yourself endorse this sentiment, in your addresses to sinners. You say, and say rightly, to them, that, unless they give up all to God, there is no hope for them. How then can you class yourself among Christians, unless there was a moment, sometime in your past history, when you did thus make this unqualified surrender? You doubtless believe that you have thus laid yourself upon the altar of God. And if so, have you *continued* to lie there? Have you not receded from the ground you then took? Has not the principle of selfishness reinstated itself in your heart? Have you habitually acted, and do you still continue to act, under the conviction that nothing which you have is your own? Or have you in reality receded from this high ground? If so, have you not proved recreant to the solemn vows which you took upon you in the day of your espousal? Have you not violated, and do you not continue to violate, a most sacred engagement?

The times in which we live, peculiarly demand a spirit of self-sacrifice, and an unquenchable zeal in doing good. The aspect of society, all over the world, is rapidly changing. New fields of benevolence are continually opening. And would the whole body of believers, at once, come up to this high standard of duty, and be willing to make any sacrifice, and perform any labor, which, in the providence of God is laid upon them, how long would it be before Christ would have the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession?

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

AN EARNEST MINISTRY, the Want of the Times, by John Angell James, with an Introduction by Rev. J. B. Condit, D.D., of Newark, N. J. New York: M. W. Dodd. 1848.

THE POWER OF THE PULPIT; or Thoughts Addressed to Christian Ministers, and those who hear them. By Gardiner Spring, D.D., Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church, New York. New York: Baker & Scribner. 1848.

SEVERAL publications on the duties and responsibilities of the Christian Ministry have recently appeared; and, we hope, have been read and pondered by those to whom more especially they have been addressed. We are indebted to the late Dr. Milnor for the republication in this country of a most excellent work, entitled, "Bridges on the Christian Ministry;" in which every individual sustaining the sacred office, or preparing to enter it, will find enough to make him exclaim: "Who is sufficient for these things!"

The works named at the head of this article, though less extensive are equally interesting and impressive. Their publication, at nearly the same date, the one in England, and the other in America, shows that, in the estimation of their respective authors, a necessity, equally urgent both there and here, exists for elevating the standard of ministerial qualifications. Such is the sympathy between the two countries, in all that respects religion and morality, that we might naturally expect a general correspondence in the state of religion, and in the spirit of its official servants. The treatise of Mr. James was called forth, evidently, from the conviction that the dissenting clergy in England needed a loud blast to awaken their flagging zeal; and our own countryman, Dr. Spring, must have written *his* book from a belief, that the pulpit with us, has lost some of its wonted energy; or else that it is susceptible of a greatly augmented power.

We shall not undertake an elaborate review of the above works; but merely give some impressions which their perusal has made on our minds.

The first and deepest impression is as to the unutterable responsibility of the sacred office. "To negotiate between God and man," as an ambassador for God, to echo his high mandates, and to beseech men to be reconciled to him; — what minister can think

Digitized by Google

of such a commission, and not tremble? Had not our great Master assigned these duties to mortals, we should never have supposed it possible they could discharge them. We should have said, Let angels come from their home of purity, and, assuming visible shape, address to men the warnings and invitations of the gospel. But infinite wisdom has seen fit to order that earthen vessels should bear the treasure of the gospel, and that unclean lips should announce its solemn truths. How many reasons will at once be suggested confirming the propriety of such an agency! We will not dwell upon them; but will only remark, that the weakness and unworthiness of the agent, whilst serving to exalt the power and grace of God, cannot but deepen in the minister a sense of responsibility. A preacher of the gospel is to be pitied, who feels not this responsibility; and we sympathize deeply with him who does. Of all the professions, that of the ministry imposes on the spirit the heaviest load. The physician has his moments of deep anxiety. The awful crisis of life and death seems sometimes to hang upon his skill. The advocate, too, stands between the trembling prisoner and the gibbet; and feels, it may be, that character and life are suspended on his exertions. But in neither case does the pressure rise to that solemn pitch, which casts the eternal destiny of hundreds on the teaching, the example, and the spirit of the minister of God. As health returns, the physician can smile; and when the verdict of acquittal is given, the advocate's heart rises in exultation. It is certain, in both cases, that the effort has been crowned with success. But in the case of the minister, all that he can usually feel, under the most favorable circumstances, is a hope that he has not labored in vain. So often is he disappointed in what appeared to be hopeful conversions, — many going back and walking no more with Christ, — that he is sometimes almost tempted to think that in scarce a single instance is his preaching a savor of life unto life. This burden is upon his spirit at all times. He lies down at night with it. It comes upon him at early dawn. It goes with him even into his seasons of so called relaxation. "I have the care of souls!" is a thought that lies with mountain weight upon him; and more than any thing else, more than all the labors connected with his office, tends to bring on premature weakness and decay.

In perusing books like these alluded to, we are at times ready to say, Who and where is the man fitted to this great work?

Digitized by Google

Who has the temperament adapted to it, combining a sensitive nature, enabling him to sympathize with souls in distress, with the hardihood of nerves that shall render him proof against alienation, discouragement, and opposition? Who has learning enough, where so much research is required; or piety enough, where Gabriel's zeal would scarce meet the exigency? How often does the minister's heart sink oppressed under such thoughts, trembling lest, "having preached to others, he himself should be a cast-away!" But let us not despair. The work is assigned to us weak mortals, by one who knew all that weakness; and who has said: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." "Lo, I am with you alway!" is the support of many a weary and desponding minister, as he sits solitary in his study; or rises, trembling through every nerve, to deliver his responsible message. Thanks to our Lord for this sweet promise, so consolatory under our conscious weakness, so encouraging amidst the obstacles we have to encounter!

Another thought suggested by reading these volumes is, that whilst a lofty standard as to the pulpit is insisted upon, sufficient allowance is not made for diversity of talent, and variety of gifts and natural temperament, in so large a number as is required for this work. A great many ministers are needed. A great many must be educated. Existing churches are but poorly supplied, and our vast and growing country is threatened with a famine of the bread of life. Under these circumstances, it will not do to wait until men can be found who shall possess all the qualifications desirable in the ministry. We are obliged to accept many who are inferior in original genius, and who can never perhaps rise above mediocrity. It is so with every profession. It always will be so. Nor do we think the pulpit will deteriorate, provided a due proportion of its occupants, — the same proportion observed in other professions, — are stars of the first magnitude. Whilst we want a great many ministers, we can do with a very few brilliant ones. The lesser lights shining in a humbler sphere, will not lose their value; whilst the greater are revolving in a wider orbit, and exhibiting an intenser radiance.

One would think, in reading the works above named, that a large proportion of the ministers of the gospel would be disheartened; that, seeing such a disparity between their attainments and the standard inculcated, they would say, We can hope to do but

Digitized by Google

little in a profession which demands such qualifications. But let none so reason. If the intention be pure, if the spirit be such as God requires, great good may be accomplished even where other important, — though less important, — qualifications are wanting. We may recollect, that our Lord entrusts to one ten talents, and to another but two; and that the great imperative point is that each shall occupy according to his several ability. Nor is it reasonable in congregations to expect that their minister shall exhibit the eloquence of a Chalmers, the depth of an Edwards, or the classic elegance of a Robert Hall. Such men, are the men of an age. They are the greater lights in the theological firmament. It is unreasonable to expect that the mass of ministers shall approach these distinguished minds. We can conceive that the church might even be less blessed by having a majority of such in her ministry. They are not in general the men to do the unobtrusive, but most needful, work of parochial duty, — to accommodate themselves to the outcast and the ignorant, to be willing to hide themselves in the obscurity of retired parishes, and to go about from house to house among the sons and daughters of affliction. Yet are we thankful that God does raise up these strong minds to stand in the breaches, and defend the bulwarks of our Zion. They shew to the world that the pulpit has power in one direction; whilst a humbler order of sanctified intellect may operate in another, and at least equally important, sphere. In the first preachers commissioned by our Lord himself, there was but one John, one Peter, and one Paul.

Another reflection forced upon us in reading the works above named is, that of all the qualifications for the sacred office, exalted piety is the most indispensable. Every thing else is, in the comparison, "but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal." A minister must be a man of preëminent piety, just as a general, be he ever so skilful a tactician, must also have preëminent courage. The power of the pulpit is dependent on this qualification, more than on all others. Piety is to the pulpit, what caloric is to the sun-beam; there will be no warmth without it. Without it, no lightnings will play, nor flaming bolt be launched. It is the electric fire that runs from heart to heart. Genius, without piety, is like a corruscation of the aurora, beautiful, but cold. But in giving such prominence to piety, we would not be understood as denying the importance of learning or of genius. How beautiful,

Digitized by Google

how effective, how glorious often, where all are in happy combination!

We feel constrained, however, to say, that every minister may rise to a dignity and influence, which shall make the pulpit efficient, and shall command the respect of all, if with but ordinary talent and no great amount of erudition, he nevertheless shall cultivate the utmost piety of heart. Let him be a *good man*. Let the conviction that he is such force itself upon all who see and hear him. Let piety shine in his life; let it impregnate with vital warmth every prayer, every sermon, every exhortation. Men do not ordinarily criticize preachers on the score of deficient learning. They are much more apt to say, that the sermon lacks power, warmth, and emotion. We do not feel it. It is cold. It does not touch our sensibilities. But if deep piety, first felt in the heart of the preacher himself, is breathed into all his official duties, such criticisms will cease, and the pulpit will command the attention and the respect of all.

Several causes have operated, as we think, to weaken the power of the pulpit, some of which may be briefly noticed.

Among these causes, we may name the fewness of revivals. These blessed seasons were like favoring and heavenward gales. They have powerfully affected for good the ministry, putting new life into its services; and coming like the descending fire, to glow upon the altar, and consume the sacrifice. The preacher receives a fresh anointing from the Holy One; and the sermon, felt first in his own soul, is made to others the power of God unto salvation. Men of humble attainments, and ordinary talents, have often been known, at such seasons, to rise to a pitch of eloquence that seemed almost like inspiration. It was because the heart was inflamed with the subject. The Spirit of God came upon them like cloven tongues of fire, and the place was shaken as with "a rushing mighty wind." Preacher and hearer were then deeply moved; the one speaking, and the other listening, as became the oracles of the living God. Did any deny the power of the pulpit then? But, alas, years have intervened since such seasons, as a general thing, have been experienced. Hence the ministry has become comparatively dull and the people worldly; and the truth, if spoken at all, is tamely and far less effectively uttered. If God, in his just displeasure, should withhold these seasons of refreshing, the pulpit will continue to decline.

Digitized by Google

Another cause, tending to rob the pulpit of its power is, as we believe, what is commonly called "the spirit of the age." Formerly the social state was more quiescent. Business was transacted with less intensity of action. Men were content with moderate gains, and slow advances towards wealth. Christians were more contemplative; read more solid works, thought more, prayed more. They had more time, and they took more, for these duties. Religion was then a subject of healthful excitement. It was the great topic. Now it is not religion, certainly not in its highest sense; no, it is the world. It is improvement, politics, railroad and steam communication. The outward, not the inward, is the cause of excitement now, and keeps the mind under a tension which almost precludes the possibility of calm reflection.

Place a community, so excited, under the gospel, and how much interest will they feel in its announcement? Give them but one day in seven to think of eternal things, while the rest of the week is occupied in intense worldly excitement, and how little chance has the pulpit to influence them? But what has this to do with the ministry? some may ask. And why should the preacher be affected by it? The question shows an ignorance of human nature. The minister does feel it, and suffers from it. By a sort of social contagion, he is himself unfavorably excited. He goes into the pulpit, under the disheartening thought, too, that his people are not there to be interested in his great theme; that they will be glad when the Sabbath sun has set, and the rattling of Mammon's car is again heard on its impetuous career. Every thing that disheartens the minister, breaks the power of the pulpit. He cannot speak with earnestness when the minds of his hearers are so jaded and listless, that they cannot be aroused by his preaching. It may be replied, that then should the minister be yet more earnest? Here, again, too little account is made of human weakness. Ministers are not angels. They are men of like passions with others; and they cannot withstand the pressure, if long continued, of such dispiriting circumstances. The whole state of things is spiritually unhealthy. There is much done to carry the light of religion into regions of darkness. Catching the spirit of the age, associated effort is doing much to sow the good seed of the Word. Great meetings are held, and animated addresses are made. But it is doubtful if all this

Digitized by Google

advances the power of the pulpit. That, in our opinion, requires a more contemplative, studious, and devotional state of the church. More real and deeper Christian experience is required; more searchings of heart; more prayerful study of God's word; more hungering for the bread, and thirsting for the water, of life. The excitement in minister and hearers must be more inward; he, like Moses, conversing with God; and they, like Israel, ready to hear what God the Lord will speak.

Some have contended that the pulpit must take the tone of the times; that the preacher, accommodating himself to this bustling age, must speak, and pray, and exhort, in true business-like style. All must be prompt, lively, and even amusing. But if the age is wrong, and the inundation of worldly excitement is so great that medical men say it is too much even for the physical frame, then, surely, ministers should use what influence they have to correct the evil. The tendency now is to sweep away the old land-marks of truth. The cry is for novelties, for excitement's sake. Shall such an unhealthful tendency be stimulated? Or ought not, rather, an effort to be made to bring the people back to a soundor state of mind. Above all, let the moral dignity of the pulpit be kept up by severe study, well prepared sermons, and solid gospel truth uttered in tones of deep earnestness; trusting in God that the day will yet come, when men will see and feel the utter vanity of all this worldly excitement. Let not the ministry accommodate itself to this feverish thirst for novelties. Old truths, as they are called, have lost none of their real weight; nor is there any lack of interest in them, among those whose hearts the Lord has touched. The word of God is not susceptible of change. It endureth forever. Yes; amid the wild confusions and overturnings of the times, thanks be to God, there is one thing that endures. This is our sheet-anchor amid the storm; and we watch the conflicting elements in the assurance that a calmer scene will succeed; when truth, like the day star, shall shine forth in its purity and brightness.

But we have said enough on this subject for the present; and conclude by acknowledging our obligation to the authors of the excellent works which have elicited these remarks; and with recommending their careful perusal by every minister of the gospel and by every candidate for the sacred office, who covets the gifts of earnestness and power in the pulpit.

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. By J. D. Morell, A. M., Author of the History of Modern Philosophy, etc. New York. 1849.

WE learn from the North British Review, that the author of this work was once a student with the celebrated Dr. Wardlaw. We are quite sure that he did not derive from him, the germs of this work. Indeed it requires but a glance at the work to discover that Schleiermacher is the oracle of Morell. "If there be one mind," these are his own words, "whose personality may have impressed itself more than any other upon my own, in tracing out the whole course of the following treatise, it is assuredly that of the revered Schleiermacher; indeed, the analysis of the idea of religion, and its reference to the absolute feeling of dependance, is taken substantially out of his great work, the 'Glaubenslehre.' That God would send such a mind, and such a heart, to shed their influence upon ourselves, and guide us from the barren region of mere logical forms, into the hallowed paths of a divine life, is the best wish I can breathe for the true welfare of every religious community in our land."

In a work upon the philosophy of religion, it is of the highest consequence to know what religion is. In defining this fundamental idea, Morell, as above intimated, follows Schleiermacher. But Schleiermacher, in forming his definition, was aiming at a union of men in religious fellowship without reference to doctrinal views. Whether he was a pantheist himself, or not, he aimed at uniting in religious fellowship, pantheists and theists. Hence he framed a definition adapted to include them.

The essence of religion, according to this definition, is a feeling of absolute dependence upon infinite power.

"In describing this absolute sense of dependence, as containing the essential element of religion, we do not mean that this *alone*, without the cooperation of the other faculties, would give rise to the religious *life*. To do this there must be intelligence — there must be activity — there must be, in short, all the other elements of human nature. But what we mean is this — that the sense of dependence *accompanying* all our mental operations gives them the peculiar hue of piety. Thinking alone cannot be religious; but thinking, accompanied by a sense of dependence on the infinite reason is *religious thought*. Activity alone cannot be religious; but activity carried on under a sense of absolute dependence upon infinite *power* is religious

Digitized by Google

action. In a word, it is this peculiar mode of feeling pervading all our powers, faculties, and inward phenomena, which gives them a religious character; so that we may correctly say that the *essence* of religion lies exactly here."

Is it not a very remarkable fact, that what is here called the very essence of religion omits all that is described as true religion in the word of God?

When our Saviour was called on to state the fundamental element of true religion, he did not specify an absolute sense of dependence on infinite power, but *love*,— supreme love to God, and impartial love to man. In like manner, the apostle Paul assures us, that the fulfilling of the law is love.

But the sense of absolute dependence on infinite power, by no means involves love. Nay, it may coexist with fear and hatred of that power. The devils, we are told, believe that there is one God, and tremble. Doubtless they have a deep sense of their absolute dependence on him; why else should they tremble? Have they then the essence of all religion? Nay,—

> "The devils know and tremble too;
> But devils cannot love."

It is indeed true, that inasmuch as God is infinite, and creatures are finite, the mind of man cannot come into its true relationship to him without a sense of dependence. This qualifies and predisposes the mind to rely on God as its strength and support. But such reliance is never properly exercised, except under the guidance and influence of love; and love presupposes, and is based upon, clear views of the character of God. Indeed Mr. Morell, as we shall soon see, cannot give an idea of Christianity without introducing love. It must be conceded that where love is absent, man's dependant nature impels him to seek support and protection from powers of various kinds, deemed superior to himself. Thus the various forms of idolatrous worship originated. All these too are called by the name religion, and of these the sense of dependence may be the essence. But of the true religion, it is not the essence, but love. It may be rightly said, that the essence of all false religion is a sense of dependence, but of all true religion it is love.

From considering the nature of religion in general, Mr. Morell proceeds to consider the essence of Christianity. So far as he

Digitized by Google

goes he certainly includes important elements of Christianity. It presupposes, he informs us, the moral degradation of man, and his bondage to evil; a total disorganization both of the *moral* and *religious* nature; a fearful abuse of human freedom on the one side, and of religious obligation on the other." The conscious removal of this state and the restoration of perfect moral freedom, harmonized with a consciousness of absolute dependence by the love of God, is the designed effect of Christianity, and this is to be accomplished through Jesus Christ, as a personal Redeemer. Here, as before stated, we see that he cannot define Christianity without introducing love as its essential element. He holds to the historical verities of Christ's life, and to redemption, whatever is meant by it, exclusively through him. He enters no farther than this into doctrinal detail. The person of Christ, his divinity, his atonement, the trinity, and similar topics, are not at all noticed. Thus he sums up the matter:

"Wherever absolute dependence and perfect freedom are reconciled by love to God, there we recognize the redemption which has been completed by Christ; and wherever this redemption is honestly accepted as the middle point of our religious life, there we recognize the religion of perfect resignation, perfect freedom, and perfect love. There may be many variations in detail, many degrees of clearness in the perception of Christian ideas, many dogmatic peculiarities occasioned by education, by temperament, or by other circumstances; but, in the two definitions we have given, the essential elements of Christianity are involved. He whose religious life is grounded upon the consciousness of the redemption of the world, and consequently of *himself* through Jesus Christ, and who exhibits the reality of this life by resignation to the will of God, joyous freedom in serving him, and the expansive spirit of love — this man, be his minor peculiarities what they may, we venture to denominate — *A Christian.*"

He proceeds, in the fifth chapter, to consider Revelation. Here he indicates a degree of looseness and inaccuracy quite discreditable to a philosophical writer of his pretensions.

He defines revelation, as if it were a mode of mental action in a recipient of truth, asserting that it is "*a mode of intelligence.*" To explain this, he states that it is not the logical mode of perceiving truth, that is, by definition, statement, or reasoning, — but the intuitional mode, that is, a direct knowledge, through the interior eye of consciousness, of higher and more spiritual realities."

According to this view, a body of truth communicated by God in human language, concerning persons and events lying beyond

Digitized by Google

the range alike of the senses and of intuition, would not be a revelation. Nothing outside of the mind can be so regarded. Nothing but its own intuitive perception of truth can constitute a revelation.

And yet, with a strange inconsistency, he says that the material universe is a revelation to the mind; P. 131, and "that Christ was in himself a divine revelation." P. 159. Is the universe then a mode of intelligence? Was Christ a mode of intelligence? Here is a plain inconsistency with his own definition.

But we are not at the end of his inaccuracies. On P. 147, he says: "All revelation implies two conditions; it implies, namely, an intelligible *object* presented, and a given power of recipiency in the subject; and in popular language, when speaking of the manifestation of Christianity to the world, we confine the term *revelation* to the former of these conditions, and appropriate the word *inspiration* to designate the latter."

Here he says that common usage applies the term to "an intelligible object presented," and not to a mode of intelligence. But on the next page he thus proceeds: "According to this convenient distinction, therefore, we may say, that revelation, in the Christian sense, indicates that act of Divine power by which God presents the realities of the spiritual world immediately to the human mind; while inspiration denotes that especial influence wrought upon the faculties of the subject, by virtue of which he is able to grasp these realities in their perfect fulness and integrity."

Here revelation is defined to be an act of divine power in presenting spiritual realities to the mind. Thus, then, revelation is first a mode of intelligence. Then it is an object presented to the mind. Then it is an act of divine power in presenting an object to the mind. If he calls the first view the scientific view, and the second the popular view, what is the third view? He seems to speak of it as the same, with what he calls the popular view. But it is not. An intelligible object is not the same with an act of divine power in presenting that object. The third use of the term is most correct. An act of God in disclosing truth to the mind is, in common and correct usage, called a revelation. But the objects presented are not a revelation, but the subject-matter of the revelation. Still farther, there is no propriety at all in calling the act of the mind in perceiving the objects presented, a revelation. But a record for others of the truths disclosed to the

Digitized by Google

mind by an act of God, is also properly called a revelation. If God thus makes known in human language his own actions in past ages, or facts concerning angels good or bad, or concerning the future state of man and the universe, these recorded disclosures are a revelation, even though containing no intuitive truths of any kind. In this sense we properly call the Bible a revelation.

To the subject of inspiration, he devotes the whole of the sixth chapter. The definition previously given of revelation, in fact expresses his view of the nature of inspiration. It is, according to him, a spiritual intuition of divine things; that is to say, it is "a mode of intelligence."

Concerning this mode of intelligence, he thus remarks:

"Inspiration does not imply any thing generically new in the actual processes of the human mind; it does not involve any form of intelligence essentially different from what we already possess; it indicates rather the elevation of the religious consciousness, and with it, of course, the power of spiritual vision, to a degree of intensity peculiar to the individuals thus highly favored by God. We must regard the whole process of inspiration, accordingly, as being in no sense *mechanical*, but purely *dynamical:* involving, not a novel and supernatural faculty, but a faculty, already enjoyed, elevated *supernaturally* to an extraordinary power and susceptibility; indicating, in fact, an inward nature so perfectly harmonized to the Divine, so freed from the distorting influences of prejudice, passion, and sin, so simply recipient of the Divine ideas circumambient around it, so responsive in all its strings to the breath of heaven, — that truth leaves an impress upon it which answers perfectly to its objective reality." Pp. 148, 149.

This elevation of the religious consciousness he says, in another place, has been carried so far sometimes as to become miraculous; and states that such an elevation took place in "certain chosen individuals for the express illumination of humanity at large." In this he refers to the writers both of the Old Testament and of the New. But this leaves two questions of radical moment still to be answered. Did this inspiration save those who were the subjects of it from a mixture of error and sin in their religious experience? And did it so extend to their writings, that in these we have a record of truth preserved, by the inspiration of God, free from error and sin?

Both of these questions he answers decidedly in the negative; and argues at great length to shew, that the facts of the case disprove the common views of the inspiration of the Word of God. He argues to this effect from the progressive nature of the Scrip-

Digitized by Google

ture morality. Progressive revelation of doctrine does not of necessity involve error; but if moral laws are imperfectly revealed, it implies an impure morality.

"And yet such an imperfect morality is plainly discernible throughout the period of the Old Testament dispensation, and frequently embodied, too, in the Old Testament Scriptures. The fierce spirit of warfare, the law of retaliation, the hatred of enemies, the curses and imprecations poured upon the wicked, the practice of polygamy, the frequent indifference to deception to compass any desirable purposes, the existence of slavery, the play, generally speaking, given to the stronger passions of our nature, — all these bespeak a tone of moral feeling far below that which Christianity has unfolded." P. 161.

He argues also to the same effect, from the seeming discrepancies of different parts of the Bible, and from alleged "discrepancies between some of the Scriptural statements, and scientific truth." He argues in like manner from alleged errors in reasoning, and from the mode in which the canon was formed. He also regards the kind of inspiration commonly assigned to the Scriptures as needless.

"Why should we be perpetually craving after a stiff, literal, verbal infallibility? Christianity consists not in propositions — it is a life in the soul; its laws and precepts are not engraven on stone, they can only be engraven on the fleshy tables of the heart. The most precise words could never convey a clear religious conception to an unawakened mind; no logical precision of language and definition, on the other hand, is needed in order to awaken up intuitions which convey more by a single flash of the inward eye, than a whole body of divinity of most approved order and arrangement could *ever* teach." P. 172.

His views are rendered still more definite by the facts, that he teaches a generic resemblance between inspiration as defined by him, and the inspiration of genius; that he holds all holy persons to be inspired in the same sense as were the writers of the Scriptures, but in a lower degree; and that as they become more holy, they may indefinitely approach the same degree of inspiration.

In making out a system of theology, the intuitions of spiritual truth proceeding from this source furnish the essential materials, and the logical powers give them their form. The great importance of the Bible lies in the fact, that it contains the intuitions of man raised to the highest degree of inspiration, and that it is eminently fitted to bring our minds into a similar state. It also furnishes historical facts in the life of Christ and holy men, to the full understanding of which similar intuitions are needed.

Digitized by Google

The bond of Christian fellowship in the church at large, he insists, should be unity in such spiritual intuitions as are common to all true Christians, and not a fixed logical system of doctrine. Individuals may indeed frame for themselves such a system, and particular churches may do the same; but to unite Christians on the great scale is impossible, except on the basis of unity in spiritual intuitions. In these intuitions is also found the source of certainty as it regards religious truth; and not in any logical definitions, processes, and formulas.

It will be seen that the whole theory of Mr. Morell is based upon his views of spiritual intuition. This leads him to say many true and important things as to the essential characteristics of a theologian. He insists that none but a regenerated man is fit to be a theologian, for none other can have a spiritual perception of the highest and most important truths of the Word of God. But this is no new discovery. It is simply a reiteration of the statement of Paul, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

If it were consistent with our limits, we could exhibit at great length many excellent things, well expressed in this work. But if in a glass of water two or three drops of Prussic acid had been put, it would be of little avail to shew that the greatest part of the contents of the tumbler was pure water; the most essential thing would be, to make manifest the fact that there was a fatal poison there.

That such is the case in this work, we think our readers will see without any additional remarks from us. The greatest, the most important thing on earth is the Word of God. If a man desires and labors to destroy just views of the inspiration of this Word, there cannot be in him truth and goodness enough to neutralize the evil. No matter how good or orthodox he may be. The better the worse. Some of the very worst works of the devil cannot be done except by good, but deluded, men. Morell's views of inspiration are not the source of any thing that is good in his work. A believer in the plenary inspiration of the Word of God can hold every truth that Mr. Morell holds. No incidental benefit, therefore, flows from his views. On the other hand, they do tend logically and directly to evils, the magnitude of which cannot be overstated.

Digitized by Google

GOD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENTS.

A MORE decisive proof can scarcely be furnished of the depraved condition of man, than that which is indicated by the words placed at the head of this article. The Lord our Maker, in order to make himself known to us, must pour out upon us the vials of his judgments. In the innocence of Paradise, Adam and Eve knew their Creator well, and daily talked with him face to face; guilt had not yet imposed upon them the necessity of learning his character through the displays of his vengeance. But a sad change came over them by transgression; and as one consequence of this change, their posterity, not liking to retain God in their knowledge, are doomed to the severe discipline of the divine terrors. It is true, that judgment is not the only thing taught in the school, where fallen man is placed to be trained for immortality. It is not alone by his frowns, that the character of Jehovah is made known to men. The goodness of God displayed continually, and in countless forms, is designed to lead them back from their errors through the paths of penitence, to the divine favor. But how many there are, who knowing not or perverting this tendency of the bounties of heaven, treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God! And so it comes to pass, while we rejoice in the assurance that God is love, that we see some of the brightest exhibitions of his benevolence towards his intelligent creation in those judgments upon transgression which make him known to the sons of men.

The divine vengeance executed upon the wicked in the future world will doubtless be a display of Jehovah's perfections, of which the present life can afford no adequate example, or even conception. Nevertheless there is enough of retribution *here* to shew its nature *hereafter;* the Lord is known by the judgments which he *now* executeth upon transgressors.

The penal dispensations of God make him known as the God of creation; for although the heavens declare his glory, although the earth speaks forth his praise, yet it would seem that the language of neither is fully comprehended by man, until his dull perception is quickened by the stars in their courses fighting against the rebel host, or by the elements employed in the unusual and terrible office of raining down ruin on the cities of the plain.

Digitized by Google

Even under the teachings of divine judgments, man is slow to learn, and is always far below the proper knowledge of the Lord. Still, his proficiency, if not the most that could be desired, is signally manifested thus far in the history of human progress.

By his judgments God is known as the dispenser of those Providences by which nations rise and fall; and vast changes come over individuals, families, and communities. Little did Egypt think of the true God while enjoying the blessings of that Nile, whose overflowings and hidden fountains were in the hollow of his hand. But when its waters were turned into blood, the inhabitants trembled at the utterance of that sacred name, which had been so often upon the lips of Moses. They could not do otherwise than have the Lord in their thoughts. The Assyrian king could insult the majesty of heaven during all the long years of his greatness, and the unchecked triumphs of his arms; but when the breath of Jehovah in a single hour laid his prowess in the dust, neither he, nor his impious flatterers, could fail to see that the Most High ruleth among the children of men.

The Lord is known by his judgments as the God of Revelation. Many of the terrible things in righteousness, inflicted upon rebellious men by the Lord, have been in confirmation of his revealed truth. The predictions of his Word have been verified in the desolations he has wrought in the earth. Of this more will be said hereafter. Now it is in all these respects, in his works, in his providences, and in his Word, that Jehovah will be exhibited, in the following pages, as *made known by the judgments which he executeth*. More especially, however, the design is to shew that there has ever been and is yet to be, continually growing evidence of the truth and value of the Bible, by means of the judgments divinely inflicted upon a sinful world.

In the prosecution of this design, the judgments of God upon the heathen will, for the present, be considered. It will be seen that the divine judgments have ever fallen upon transgressors against known laws; that in their severity they have been proportioned to the light and privileges against which sins have been committed; and that through these judgments the perfections of the adorable Godhead have been more and more displayed in view of the world.

In the inscrutable wisdom of God, the knowledge of the true religion was for many ages confined to one nation. The rest were

Digitized by Google

given over to the errors, vices, and miseries of Paganism. We learn from the apostle Paul, that the heathen are without excuse in their idolatry, inasmuch as the works of God declare his power and Godhead. It was because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, nor to worship him as God, that they were abandoned to the abominations of the Pagan worship. The heavy judgments, therefore, which have come upon them are the just consequence of the violation of natural conscience, — the refusal to hear that voice of the Lord, which speaks to all his rational creatures by the things that are made.

But besides this light of nature, the heathen have, even of old, enjoyed more or less the light of revelation, by being brought into collision with those who have been entrusted with the sacred oracles. The nations around, and in the midst of, the Hebrews when they dwelt in the promised land, the nations through which they journeyed in their wanderings, and the nations among whom they were at different times held in bondage, all learned something of the communications of those holy men who spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost. Such knowledge of the true God made their idolatries the more inexcusable. As might have been expected, the severe strokes of the divine indignation that fell upon them were proportioned in good degree to the light against which they sinned. The armies of Israel were for a long time struggling in their hostilities with the Philistines, and with other heathen nations who defied the living God and trusted in false deities. Very often these nations experienced the terrible calamities of unsuccessful war; and as often they were told that the great Jehovah, whom they rejected, had turned the contest against them. Thus his judgments made him known to them. In allusion to his victorious arms, the Psalmist says: "I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most High; when mine enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence; the heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made; in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth."

By such manifestations it is known, even among the heathen, that Jehovah judgeth in the earth. The instrumentalities which he employs in the execution of his judgments are numerous and various. The heathen, as in the case noticed by the Psalmist, are sometimes snared in their own net, and ruined by the very projects

Digitized by Google

which they designed for the ruin of others; sometimes their mutual contentions swallow them up; oftentimes their sins are read in their punishment, the inebriate being found in an ignominious grave, and the prodigal among the husks which the swine do eat. But whatever store-house of vengeance is opened for their chastisement, it is always opened by the hand of God, always opened in consequence of sin that calls for his judgments, and always by them are the justice and holiness of the divine character made known.

One of the most remarkable instances of the Lord's being made known by his judgments upon the heathen, is found in the story of Daniel's connection with the monarchs of Babylon. When by the interpretation of a dream, the prophet made known to Nebuchadnezzar, not only the various divine judgments which were to come upon four successive mighty empires, but also the ultimate establishment and triumph of the Messiah's kingdom, the disclosure made such an impression upon the king, that he exclaimed: "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods and a Lord of kings!" When afterwards, in spite of this conviction, he doomed to the fiery furnace the captive Hebrews who would not countenance the Pagan worship, and when he saw how their God delivered them, a still deeper impression of the true religion was made upon his mind. "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort." But a sorer trial is to make a yet deeper impression of the same truth. The king is driven from among men, and his dwelling is with the beasts of the field; he is made to eat grass as oxen, and is wet with the dew of heaven, year after year, until he is brought *to know* that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men. Here surely is judgment of the most terrible kind, loss of reason and of social converse in one who had borne sway over millions. And what is the result of this visitation of the divine displeasure on one who had profited so little by previous visitations? Does he not become better acquainted with Jehovah, and anxious that others too may know him? "Now," says he, "I praise, and extol, and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment."

Remarkable as is this case of Nebuchadnezzar in illustration of the truth that Jehovah is known by his judgments, subsequent events make the lesson still more impressive. Jeremiah had foretold that all nations should serve this monarch, his son, and his

Digitized by Google

grandson after him; and that then his kingdom should come to an end. In accordance with this prophecy, the kingdom was invaded by Cyrus, in the reign of Belshazzar. The king and his courtiers were confident of security, inasmuch as they deemed the walls of the city impregnable, and as they were supplied with twenty years' provisions. Whatever apprehensions of danger they might have had in the hour of sober reflection were sure to be drowned in the scenes of revelry into which they plunged themselves. Had Belshazzar trusted in the God whom his grandfather acknowledged before all nations, he might indeed have been confident of safety in spite of the beleaguering army of the greatest general of the times. But instead of this, he derided Israel's God in the midst of his drunken festival. Not only did he and his guests profane the vessels of the Lord, but while so doing they praised their own false deities.

And now shall not the true God, thus outraged by those who had such opportunities of knowing him, speak to them in judgments? What believer in the Bible can wonder at the terrible sequel; the fingers writing upon the palace wall, the countenance of the king changed, his guilty thoughts throwing him into dreadful confusion, consternation rapidly spreading through the minds of his courtly attendants, his magicians once more convoked, and once more in vain? Not one of them can

> "Minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from his memory a rooted sorrow,
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
> Or with some sweet oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff,
> Which weighs upon the heart."

Already Jehovah begins to be known at the impious court by means of his judgments.

There was in Babylon, at this time, an aged woman, extolled for her prudence by heathen historians. It was Nitocris, the queen mother, widow of Nebuchadnezzar, and still, on account of her great wisdom, entrusted with the chief administration of public affairs. She had not forgotten the former manifestations of the Lord through the judgments he had executed on Babylon. The calamities of her husband were fresh in her mind; so also was his recovery from his afflictions, and the honor which he publicly rendered to the God of Israel. She had retained her

Digitized by Google

confidence in Daniel as possessing the spirit of the Holy One, and at her suggestion he was brought before the king. The interview between them is one of the most instructive occurrences mentioned in the Bible, and especially so in reference to the subject we are considering. At the outset, the king acknowledges that he had been acquainted with the excellent wisdom of Daniel, and with the source whence it had been derived. Therefore his derision of the true God was not the result of ignorance, but of gross and presumptuous impiety. Daniel does not proceed to interpret the hand-writing, until he had boldly and piously attempted to awaken the mind of the king to serious reflection. Nebuchadnezzar, in his ignorance, had been treated tenderly when he transgressed; but now, when the knowledge of God had been spread abroad over the whole realm by means of the former visitations, there was no excuse for the iniquities of Belshazzar. To him belonged stern rebuke. O king, — such was the solemn purport of Daniel's address, — the Most High God gave thy grandfather a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and his glory taken from him, and the bitter cup of misery given him to drink, *till he learned* that the God of Israel ruleth in the kingdoms of men. And, thou, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou *knewest all this;* but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven, profaned his worship, and praised the idols which he abhors; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified! Having delivered this admonition to the king, Daniel announced to him the interpretation of the hand-writing, — so well known to every reader of the Bible: "Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting:" — strict justice determines thy fate; thou hast nothing to answer to the charges brought against thee; both thy kingdom and thy life are about to close! In that night was the king of the Chaldeans slain, together with his nobles, in the midst of their profane revelry.

In considering this judgment of God upon Babylon, we cannot fail to observe his displeasure against idolatry. The praise bestowed upon idols of silver and gold was in itself an indignity to the true God. But to this was added the profane use of the vessels which had been sacrilegiously taken from the temple at Jerusalem. Here were abominations of idolatry far worse than

Digitized by Google

could have been practised in other heathen countries; for they were practised in defiance of the Lord of Hosts, who had previously manifested himself in the court of Babylon. This was the great charge brought against Belshazzar: "Thou hast not humbled thyself, *though thou knewest all this.*" It was no secret to him, that Jehovah had made himself known by his judgments in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. The dismemberment of the kingdom, and the tragic death of the great men attached to it, were the judgments of God upon heathen who had been made acquainted, far more than most other heathen, with the character of the true God. They had sinned against clearer light, and were therefore doomed to severer judgments, and by those severer judgments was the Lord still further made known.

In order to obtain full possession of all the light which is reflected on the subject now before us, from the history of Daniel's residence in Babylon, we must follow him into the reign of Darius, of whose court he was prime minister. As he was so decided a worshipper of the true God, the distinguished honor bestowed upon him was, in effect, honor given to that divine Being to whom he publicly attributed his excellent spirit of wisdom. Consequently the knowledge of the Lord was more and more extended throughout the great realms of Darius. But there were those high in power, who hated the true religion, and Daniel as its distinguished representative. These men finding nothing in the conduct of Daniel wherein they could accuse him, devised a project for his ruin, which none but heathen could devise or execute. They insidiously gained the assent of Darius to such a decree as enforced idolatry, and cut off Daniel from his wonted privilege of prayer. He was so well known for his stedfast piety, that no doubt existed as to the course he would pursue. His enemies, therefore, felt sure that he would be devoured in the lion's den. Here once more is the struggle between idolaters and the true God. Which shall prevail? The persecutors of the Hebrew prophet, having enjoyed, as we have seen, great advantages for knowing the true God, knew equally well the consequences of disobeying him. Shall they not therefore be beaten with many stripes? and shall not the Lord be known yet more signally by the judgments which he shall execute upon them? Darius had been less guilty than his courtiers in this transaction; inasmuch as the scheme was theirs into which he had been unadvisedly

Digitized by Google

drawn. Hence the judgment fell upon them; the devouring jaws that had been closed when Daniel came among them, at the entrance of his persecutors were opened by those unseen hands which no adverse power can restrain. The king had been so far enlightened in the knowledge of Israel's God, as to have some expectation that Daniel would be delivered from the murderous design of his enemies; but when this deliverance was actually effected, and vengeance had overtaken those who had hoped to aggrandise themselves by the ruin of the innocent and devout, the king was overwhelmed by a sense of Jehovah's presence and power. The decree which he put forth was in the same spirit with that of Nebuchadnezzar; but it must have had greater influence on the minds of the people, on account of the accumulating instances in which the Lord was making himself known among them by his judgments. "Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you! I make a decree that in every dominion of my kingdom, men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, and stedfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth."

The judgments of God upon idolatrous Babylon have been treated of at the greater length, because they afford the most signal illustration of the manifestation of his perfections, through his vengeance poured out upon the heathen. We can make no mistake in the case, because we have the inspired record of the judgments executed, the reasons of the different degrees of their severity, and of their effect in making Jehovah known.

But the principle is just the same in all the dealings of God with idolaters. Could we know as minutely, and as certainly, all the circumstances attending the judgments of God upon the heathen, as we do those connected with his judgments upon Babylon in the time of Daniel, we should doubtless see clearly, that it is only in consequence of great and inexcusable provocations that the heathen are visited by the vengeance of the Lord. Not even for the sublime purpose of making himself known throughout the world, does he willingly afflict or grieve the children of men.

We are expressly told that the Ammonites and Moabites, and the other nations round about ancient Judea, — though they were

Digitized by Google

frequently made the instruments of executing the divine vengeance on rebellious Israel, — were themselves visited with still severer judgments, because they were idolaters, and because they hated and persecuted the worshippers of the true God.

It has been a cause of perplexity to the devout Christian, and a weapon of attack with the infidel, that the Israelites should have been employed to inflict such terrible sufferings on the heathen nations around them, and especially on the Canaanites who were driven from their homes, those pleasant places which God designed as the goodly heritage of his people. The spirit of the gospel is so adverse to exterminating wars, that we shudder at the rehearsal of such deeds as were committed by Joshua, and Samuel, and Daniel, and others of whom the world was not worthy. Much more do we shudder at the imprecations on the adversaries of Israel, that they may be utterly destroyed, and their little ones taken and dashed against the stones. We come to the conclusion, that there must be some special reason why the ancient people of God were commanded to destroy their fellow-creatures without mercy. And this conclusion is just. The enemies whom they were commanded to destroy, were enemies both of God and man, — wicked beyond the power of language to describe. In their contempt of Israel's God, a contempt which was increased in proportion as they knew more of him through their intercourse with his people, they sought to overthrow the true worship, and to exterminate the saints from the earth. As a necessary consequence of such hatred of God and his people, they were sunk in the most disgusting vices and revolting abominations of idolatry. The Canaanites are described, in various parts of the Old Testament, as being altogether as ripe for the destroying vengeance of heaven as were the inhabitants of Sodom, when the Lord rained fire and brimstone on them out of heaven. Now the instruments of God's vengeance are various. The storm and the earthquake are his, and his are the sword of Gideon and the jaw-bone in the hand of Samson. It suited the character of the early dispensation, that God should make known to his servants his purpose to destroy the guilty inhabitants of the land, and that he should designate them as the executioners of his wrath. So ordered, they could not do otherwise than obey. Had Abraham, when God told him of his intention to destroy Sodom, been told also that he was to be the leader of a strong army sent forth for the

Digitized by Google

purpose, the patriarch would no more have shrunk from the fulfilment of the decree than he did from the sacrifice of Isaac. He might have interceded as earnestly as he did when the angels were on their way to the devoted plain; but when he had learned what was the will of God, that would have been the end of his hesitation, though the next thing to be done should have been to bathe his sword in the blood of his own kindred.

It is indeed possible, and may be probable, that some of the Hebrews who went forth from time to time to slay the Canaanites were actuated by feelings which, by the eyes of infinite purity, were seen to be wrong. But however that might be, it is certain that the Canaanites themselves deserved *at the hands of God* all they ever suffered. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? The Canaanites were surrounded by the manifestations of the divine perfections in the works of creation and providence, and they should have glorified the Godhead; but instead of this, they turned his glory into the image of corruptible things; they caused their children to pass through the fire as an offering to Moloch; they uncovered the nakedness of father, and mother, and sister; the very worst and most nameless pollutions of heathenism were familiar to them. In a word, the whole horrid picture given by Paul of the entire heathen world, belonged preëminently to the Canaanites, — who were filled with all unrighteousness, full of envy and murder, deceit and malignity, inventors of evil things, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; *who knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

It is perfectly obvious, that the Hebrews, who were commissioned to slay the Canaanites, were aware of the cause of the destruction they inflicted; for the Lord had said to his people: "Defile not ye yourselves with any of these things; for in all these *the nations are defiled, which I cast out before you; and the land is defiled; therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.*"

The armies of Israel, if God saw fit, might just as well be employed in the punishment of such abominations, as might the midnight pestilence. It was enough that the punishment was righteous, and that the means of its infliction were in the hands of a holy and benevolent God. Jehovah here, as elsewhere, was made known by the judgments which he executed.

Digitized by Google

As to the destruction of little children, and of the comparatively innocent, in the general ruin, it involves the solution of a question far too deep to be hastily decided. Suffice it to say, that such is the divine economy, that children *are* involved in the miseries which flow from the sins of their parents. This is a fact which cannot be disputed; and every effort to explain it will naturally carry back the mind to the great Scriptural fact of the connection between Adam's transgression and the present condition of his posterity. This fact belongs indeed to the deep things of God, unfathomable by man's intelligence, at least in our present imperfect state. It becomes us to say of all these things: "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints."

Let us be careful to keep our minds constantly impressed with the serious consideration which has already been brought to view in regard to the doom of the Canaanites, and other heathen nations round about Zion. They practised themselves, and they encouraged in others, those abominations which they knew to be worthy of the severest punishment, even of death. The allegation brought against the whole heathen world by the apostle Paul,—that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, was especially applicable to those nations which persisted in their idolatry and shameful vices, notwithstanding that knowledge of the true God which they had gained by their proximity to the Hebrews. It is also applicable both to Egypt and Babylon; and for this reason, they both experienced awful judgments when they rebelled against the Lord. But there were none certainly, in all the earth, who had greater opportunities of knowing the true God by means of contact with the Hebrews, than the Canaanites. The judgments which came upon them from time to time in different forms and dreadful severity, were inflicted because they rejected the God of Israel, whose character was more and more made known to them in every conflict they had with his people. Had they repented and reformed in proportion as their knowledge of the Lord increased, pardon, peace and prosperity would have been granted to them; but inasmuch as they only sinned the more when they had the greater light, they drew upon themselves continually accumulating judgments.

The enemies of Israel were frequently made the instruments in the hands of God, of punishing his people for their sins; but

Digitized by Google

when in doing this they indulged a spirit of triumph over the true worship, their sin was the greater, because the very work in which they were employed gave them better views of the greatness and moral excellence of that God whom they still neglected. Hence their own punishment was the more awful. When the Assyrians besieged Jerusalem in the time of Hezekiah, they brought no more distress and suffering upon the city than had been deserved; but when in their profane insolence they began to defy Jehovah himself, of whom their very invasion of Judea gave them greater knowledge, the destroying angel was sent forth into their camp, and the monarch himself was hurried away to his ignominious and miserable death.

Not to dwell too long on a principle which no intelligent reader of the Bible will call in question, we cite but one more instance in its confirmation. By the prophet Zephaniah, the Lord says: "I have heard the reproach of Moab, and the revilings of the children of Ammon, whereby they have reproached my people. Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah. This shall they have for their pride, *because they have reproached and magnified themselves against the people of the Lord of Hosts.*"

For a long succession of years, Moab and Ammon had enjoyed many favorable opportunities for gaining the knowledge of the true religion. They had been familiar with the history of God's people, and the remarkable manifestations of the divine perfections through them. When, therefore, they set themselves against the Israelites and their worship, the cup of their iniquity was full, and the terrible wrath of the Lord was sent forth against them. Their punishment was proportioned to the increased light against which they sinned. The Lord had already made himself known by the judgments which he executed among them; and now he was about to magnify himself still more, by overwhelming vengeance poured upon them, because they had not properly regarded his previous corrections.

The accumulation of judgments, and the more aggravated forms in which they were continually appearing, were constantly making the great Jehovah known in the earth. More and more was the prophecy extending, "The Lord will be terrible unto them, for he will famish all the gods of the earth, and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen."

Digitized by Google

MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATIONS.

It is quite natural, that persons so peculiarly situated as ministers, — having common cares, troubles, sorrows, joys, labors, and difficulties, with which none but themselves can have an experimental acquaintance, — should associate themselves for the purposes of mutual consultation, counsel, improvement, and encouragement. Though they may disclaim all power over churches, or over individuals not of their own body, yet, like all other voluntary associations, the common law allows them to decide what shall be the terms of membership, and what persons shall be admitted under those terms.

So long ago as 1576, such stated meetings were held, chiefly for study of the Scriptures, by zealous ministers belonging to the Church of England. As these associations had a strong relish of Puritanism, though at that time there were almost no dissenters, Queen Elizabeth resolved to suppress them. The pious Grindal, archbishop of Canterbury, in a letter to her majesty, warmly vindicated their usefulness. For this she harshly rebuked him; and the "Prophesyings," as they were termed, were put down in 1577. Under Cromwell, associations of Congregational ministers were formed in most of the counties, and flourished greatly till the restoration of the Stewarts. They were then mostly discontinued, until the revolution in 1688, when they again recovered their vigor. During the melancholy decline of religion in England, in the next century, these associations died away. But within thirty or forty years, they have been resumed with great energy, and with the happiest effects on the interests of religion. They have ever been most active and useful, when piety has been most efficient and prosperous.

In New England such associations are almost as ancient as the country itself. The first was formed by the ministers of Boston and vicinity in 1635; and met, once in two weeks, at the houses of the members in succession. The usual business was the discussion of some important question in theology. It appears by Governor Winthrop's Journal, that Roger Williams and Mr. Skelton, then ministers at Salem, regarded the measure with jealousy, lest it might become an entering wedge for Presbyterianism, and so put in peril the liberties of the churches. The

Digitized by Google

experience of more than two centuries has proved that these fears were groundless. The Associations of New England, both local and general, have been highly useful and influential; and the independence of the churches is greater than it was of old. In Salem itself, an association "for mutual help in discharging ministerial duties," was organized in the year 1716.

Through the kindness of a friend, an ardent and liberal antiquarian, we are enabled to give the following document, which has never before appeared in print.

"At Charleston, in N. E., Oct. 13, 1690. It is Agreed by us, whose names are underwritten, that we do Associate ourselves for the promoting of the Gospel, and our mutual Assistance and furtherance in that great work. In order thereunto,

"1st. That we meet Constantly at the College in Cambridge, on a Monday, at nine or 10 of the clock in the morning, once in six weeks, or oftener if need shall be.

"2d. That in such meetings one shall be chosen Moderator pro tempore, for the better order and decency of the proceedings, which Moderator is to be chosen at the end of every meeting.

"3d. That the Moderator's work be, 1. To end the meeting wherein he is chosen, and to begin the next, with prayer. 2d. To propose matters to be debated, and receive the suffrages of the Brethren. 3d. To receive, by Consent of the Brethren, the subscriptions of such as shall joyne with us, and to keep all Papers belonging to the Association. 4. To give and receive notices, and appoint meetings upon Emergent occasions.

4th. That we shall submit to the counsels, reproofs, and censures of the Brethren so Associated and assembled, in all things in the Lord. (Eph. 5: 21.)

5th. That no one of us shall relinquish this Association, nor forsake the Appointed meetings, without giving sufficient Reason for the same.

"6th. That our work in the said meeting shall be, 1st. To debate any matter relating to ourselves. 2d. To hear and consider any Cases which shall be proposed to us from Churches or Private persons. 3d. To answer any Letters directed to us from any other Associations or Persons. 4th. To discourse of any Question proposed at the former meeting."

This document bears the signatures of Charles Morton, James Allen, Michael Wigglesworth, Joshua Moody, Samuel Willard,

Digitized by Google

John Bailey, Nathaniel Gookin, Cotton Mather, Nehemiah Walter. Those who are familiar with the early ecclesiastical history of New England will recognize these as the names of those who were "men of mark;" and who, in this associate capacity, were likely to "leave their mark" very distinctly upon the opinions of their time. A curious evidence of this now lies before us in a small volume, entitled "Thirty Important Cases, Resolved with Evidence of Scripture and Reason. [Mostly,] By several Pastors of Adjacent Churches, meeting in Cambridge, New England. [With some other memorable matters.] Now Published for General Benefit. Boston in New England. Printed by Bartholomew Green, and John Allen. Sold at the Book-sellers Shops. 1699."

This rare work opens with an "Advertisement," by Cotton Mather, which, like every thing from his pen, is replete with information. He tells us, that the number of members in the Association was then seventeen; that the meetings were held in the library of Harvard College, on the first Monday of every month, except the three winter months; that numerous cases of discipline or of conscience were, from all parts of the country, referred to them for advice; and that, as many times the same question was submitted to them for their opinion, by different churches or persons, it was thought best to make public this selection from their most important recorded determinations, together with the reasons of them. "Behold," he says, "the methods observed by an Association of ministers, who, without assuming the least authority unto themselves over any others in the world, have been willing this way, as well to strengthen themselves in the great work of glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ, as with the best of their studies to oblige all others that may see cause to make use thereof." He also says: "While our famous Hooker lived, the meetings of pastors in their several vicinities, were maintained and cherished in the colony of Connecticut, and managed with no little advantage to all the colony." One of Mr. Hooker's last and emphatic sayings was: "We must agree upon constant meetings of ministers."

Among the questions briefly discussed, in this little volume of Reports, were these: "Whether the Church *Covenant* used in the Churches of New England, be of divine institution?" — Affirmed. "Whether to drink healths be an usage lawful for a Christian?" — Negatived. "Whether instrumental music may be used by the

Digitized by Google

Churches of Christ in his public worship and service?" — Negatived. "Whether it be lawful for a man to marry his wife's own sister?" — Negatived. "Whether, and how far, the discipline of our Lord in our Churches, is to be extended unto the children therein baptized?" "What loan of money upon usury may be practised?" On a proposition "concerning the power of elders," the doctrine of the Platform is maintained, namely, that the elders have a negative on the votes of the brethren; though the elders, in matters relating to the duties of the fraternity, such as elections, admissions, and censures, can do nothing without the concurrence of the lay brethren.*

These items may serve as a small contribution toward the history of our ministerial associations. The time draws nigh when such histories will be written. Indeed some, as we learn, are already in preparation for the press. The memorials of these bodies, and of the learned and pious members who composed them, must have much to interest the historical reader. It is, beyond computation, how much of influence has been wielded by these quiet and unobtrusive assemblages; how much they have helped to raise the standard of ministerial efficiency and usefulness; and how much they have subserved the interests of truth, piety, and benevolence, in our free and prosperous churches.

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

CREEDS RETURNING INTO FASHION. — The July number of the Christian Examiner contains the annual Address read, last May, before the Conference of Unitarian Ministers in Boston. This Address was delivered by Rev. Dr. Gannett, and relates to the nature and importance of theology. It contains many matters on which, if we touched them at all, we should be obliged to make some severe strictures. But, for the present, we confine ourselves to the most prominent feature of the Address, which affords us much satisfaction as indicating a change for the better among our Unitarian neighbors. It is well known, that, for a long time, they have been bitterly opposed to creeds in every shape and form; and have used the whole of their literary and religious influence to bring them into odium and contempt. The results of this opposition, however, have been chiefly confined to themselves; and are mostly seen in that laxity of belief as to the

* Most of these matters are incorporated by Mather into the Fifth Book of his Magnalia.

Digitized by Google

divine claims of Christianity, which has, of late, caused deep anxiety and alarm among the Unitarians themselves. Many of their young ministers, making the most of Dr. Channing's declaration that "Christianity is not a doctrine, but a spirit," seem to regard it as the summit of religious philosophy to cast off all settled opinions in regard to the system of divine truth. We once heard Rev. Dr. Lowell, in the Massachusetts Convention, quote with approbation the saying of Dr. Priestley, "that the longer he studied, the shorter his creed grew." It was a natural inference, that, if his studies had been sufficiently extended, his belief would have contracted itself till it had no perceptible dimensions left.

Recent developments have begun to convince the sincerer sort of Unitarians, that this strain of remark must be abandoned, or else they will soon have to relinquish all title to the precious name of "believers." Not many years ago, when Dr. Gannett delivered the Dudleian Lecture, at Cambridge, in which he took occasion to inveigh against creeds with much warmth, Judge Story is reported to have said, as the audience was retiring, "that the ministers may say what they please, but the time is coming when we shall be compelled to have a creed of our own." The venerated Story is no more; but the Dudleian lecturer survives to verify that prediction. Witness his Address, published in the last Examiner, in which he contends earnestly "for some settled, well-defined religious belief." He now says: "I cannot for the life of me understand how a man who has no fixed opinions, no creed which his own thought has written out, can have any solid basis of character. All practical religion, all personal piety, must have a doctrinal basis." And again he says: "Unless a man believe something, and know that he believes it, and know what it is that he believes, his penitence, his devotion, his hope, are only shadows cast upon his mind by the passing influences of life." What he thus asserts of the individual he also extends to each church or denomination. "It must," he insists, "have a theology of its own, which can be stated in intelligible language, and be reduced to scientific propositions." And speaking of his own denomination, he declares emphatically: "*We* must have a theology of our own, or we shall perish, and we ought to perish." This great change in Dr. Gannett's views as to the benefit and necessity of "modes of faith," he has recently manifested on another occasion. He is reported in the papers, as having solemnly charged a candidate for ordination, "to have a creed, — to hold distinct propositions in theology, each of which he could preface with 'I believe;' and that without this his labors would be desultory and unsuccessful." These principles commend themselves to common sense and sincere piety.

We rejoice in this alteration of tone on the part of Dr. Gannett and others. For though creeds, like other good things, have been abused and misapplied, they must be resorted to, or there can be no organic Christian union and action, and no intelligent communion of saints. We rejoice, too, because of our profound conviction, that no sincere and devout inquirer can frame a creed from the Scriptures which shall be in harmony with the *whole* Scriptures, and not be at the same time distinctly Evangelical.

Digitized by Google

DR. JEWETT'S LECTURES AND WRITINGS. — Of all that "legion of honor" which has fought in behalf of Temperance, few have striven so bravely, or on so small pay and rations, or with more of cheerfulness and success, than Dr. Charles Jewett. He is eminently fitted for his work, combining a pathos which has nothing "soft" about it, with a mirth which, though unfailing, is never unfeeling; and uniting sound religious principle, with a zeal that never dies and a perseverance that never tires. "He is a "dear lover" of the wretched victims of vice, and a "hearty good hater" of the destroying vice which preys upon them. Like Hercules, he is a queller of monsters and oppressors. His book, just issued by John P. Jewett, begins with the Doctor's "frontispiece," engraven so as to bring him freshly before the mind's eye of any one who has seen him just ready to open his lips, and let out the keenest thing he ever said. Then come seven of his unique speeches, discussing with Yankee shrewdness some of the most vital points involved in the Temperance reform. These are followed by certain "fugitive pieces" in verse and in prose, furnishing samples of all the author's various styles, moods, and talents. As intemperance seems, of late, to be recovering ground among us, and as the literature of Temperance has not received many recent additions, we hope that Dr. Jewett's book may have a wide circulation; and that thus, through the press, he may reach even more than he has ever addressed with the voice. He is safe in saying of his book to the rum-sickened public, what he has often said when prescribing a dose of medicine to a suffering friend: "If you can only manage to swallow it, I believe it will do you good."

DR. POND'S REVIEW OF DR. BUSHNELL. — Having ourselves, as our readers are aware, gone very thoroughly over the same ground, we were surprised to find how completely Dr. Pond had travelled in a track of his own. If we had arranged for a division of labor with him, he could hardly have occupied a more distinct portion of the field. We aimed to fell the tree, by laying the axe to the root. Dr. Pond has lopped off all the branches, chopped them into cord-wood, and piled them away, not omitting to bind up the brush into fagots for the oven. His review is distinguished from others that we have seen, by the greater attention bestowed on Dr. Bushnell's Discourse on Dogma and Spirit. This discourse pours great contempt on theology as a science; and the reviewer, as a professed theologian, zealously vindicates his high calling. He seems to feel as did Lord Bacon, when he said: "I hold every man a debtor to his profession; from the which as men of course do seek to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty so to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto. This is performed, in some degree, by the honest and liberal practice of a profession, when men shall carry a respect not to descend into any course that is corrupt and unworthy thereof, and preserve themselves from the abuses wherewith the same profession is noted to be infected; but much more is this performed, if a man be able to visit and strengthen the roots and foundation of the science itself; thereby not only gracing it in reputation and dignity, but also amplifying it in possession and substance."

Digitized by Google

Dr. Pond has written much, and written well, in defence of the faith once delivered to the saints; but he has never written with more force, conclusiveness, and dignity, than in this last offering of his zeal at the shrine of truth. We are glad that his book is characterized by so good a spirit; "for it is better so to write as to make a critic turn Christian, than so as to make a Christian turn critic."

ANCIENT AND MODERN ORTHODOXY. — It is very often asserted, by those who are unfriendly to the evangelical truth, that our modern orthodoxy is so different from that of our Puritan fathers, that they would not acknowledge us as their "own sons in the faith." It is true, that some articles of faith are made more prominent, and some less so, than formerly. Thus the great doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance is far more strongly held and asserted than formerly. It has no place in that good Calvinistic confession, the Thirty-nine Articles of Faith of the Church of England; and occupies only a brief clause, among other particulars, in one of the answers to the Shorter Catechism. And the same is substantially true, of that prime doctrine, — Regeneration. It is a gross mistake to suppose that Orthodoxy among our fathers bore one unvarying stamp. The diversities of opinion among them were as great as those among the orthodox of the present day; but those diversities did not destroy their unity in respect of the more vital matters in which they were agreed. As Governor Stoughton said, in his Election Sermon, preached in 1668,* while he was yet in the ministry: "Circumstantial differences ought not to breed substantial divisions; that would be a monstrous and gigantine birth!" And John Norton said before him: "Unity in judgment is to be endeavored, because truth is one and indivisible; yet some difference touching the truth must be endured, because of the weakness of men." Agreeable to these sentiments was the practice of that day. Though the Congregationalist Owen and the Presbyterian Baxter wrestled as theologians, they embraced as Christian brethren. Their endless controversy, which fills the shelf of a library, related to matters far more important than those in dispute between Dr. Taylor and Dr. Tyler. Cotton Mather, who cherished the utmost veneration for Baxter, remonstrates with much warmth against his loose notions on the subject of justification. We have seen a long and loving letter from this very Mather, urging a distinguished Huguenot divine to take refuge in New England from his persecutors; and assuring him that his known Arminian tendencies would not prevent the people from esteeming him for his learning and piety. The two Goodwins, John and Thomas, between whom a like difference existed, were both in fraternity with the Westminster divines. Innumerable instances like these can be cited, shewing that at least as great differences of opinion were tolerated among our fathers, as can be traced between the strictest of them, and the laxest school of theologians recognized as orthodox at the present time. And, therefore, the assertion, that

* In this admirable sermon, occurs, for the first time, as we suppose, that classical saying: "God sifted a whole nation, that he might send choice grain over into this wilderness."

Digitized by Google

our fathers would disown any of their evangelical descendants on grounds of doctrinal defection, must be set down as one of the "fretful pothers" of peevish ignorance. It is our firm belief that the great doctrines of the Bible were never embraced by a greater number of minds, or held more intelligently and firmly, than at this day. Error indeed abounds, and it always has done since the fall. But truth also abounds, and that more and more from year to year. It is not for a moment to be imagined, that any foes can be too strong for God and his truth. There is one strong proof that the fathers would own us as being in their fellowship; and that is found in the fact that we retain such strong attachment to their writings. The American Tract Society, in seeking to diffuse a popular religious literature throughout the land, doubtless seeks to print such works as will be likely to find general favor with the great evangelical community. And yet how large a proportion of the books selected by the able conductors of that useful institution, is from the pens of those ancient worthies, who, as is pretended by some, in their ignorance both of the fathers and the children, would not vouchsafe to us a corner in the Lord's house. We conclude with the sound advice of Sidonius Apollinaris, that the ancients should be regarded with respect, and the moderns without envy!

ORDINATIONS.

Mar. 27. Mr. Samuel V. Blakeslee, Farmington, Iowa; to go as an Evangelist to California.
June 6. Mr. A. Kidder, Alexander, Genesee Co., N. Y.
" " Mr. Josiah M. Stearns, Lunenburg, Vt.
" 9. Mr. Silas J. Francis, Cincinnati, Ohio; as an Evangelist.
" 14. Mr. Otis Lombard, New South Marlboro', Ms.
" 20. Mr. James Fletcher, Third Church, North Danvers, Ms.
" " Mr. William M. Thayer, Ashland, Ms.

INSTALLATIONS.

June 14. Rev. L. C. Rouse, Edwardsburg, Mich.
" 27. Rev. Charles Duren, Waitsfield, Vt.
July 11. Rev. William J. Newman, York, Me.
" " Rev. M. H. Wilder, Howard Street Church, Salem, Ms.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

June 13. Rev. Aaron Dutton, New Haven, Conn., aged 69.
" 29. Rev. Samuel P. Abbot, Farmington, Me., aged 34.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] SEPTEMBER, 1849. [No. 9.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Way of Salvation,	397
A Sound Mind,	405
Western Reminiscences,	412
The Person of Christ,	423
Observations on Men, Books and Things:	
Exploration of the Dead Sea,	438
Visit to the Monasteries in the Levant,	439
Nineveh and its Remains,	439
Ecclesiology,	440
Apostles' Creed,	441
French Politics,	442
Congregational Friends,	443
Pilgrimage of Adam and David,	443
Ecclesiastical Lists,	444

PARTICULAR NOTICE.

A large extra edition of the June number of the Christian Observatory has been struck off. It contains a searching and thorough review of Dr. Bushnell's recent work, occupying sixty pages.

Booksellers and others will be supplied on moderate terms for cash.

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office six dollars, shall receive four copies of the Christian Observatory for 1849.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1849 C.O. 11.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. SEPTEMBER, 1849. No. 9.

THE WAY OF SALVATION.

We would first speak of man's way of salvation; then of that divine method which alone can give true comfort and elevation to the soul.

It is man's way of salvation, to be his own savior. He will save himself by his works, by his penances, by outward observances, by rigid abstinence from particular sins, by the cultivation of good feelings, or at best by using Christ in his own strength as means to this end,—without giving himself freely and entirely into the hands of Christ, to be saved by him. This is man's way of salvation. He always prefers to save himself.

Conviction of sin, is more common than some suppose. Probably most persons are occasionally the subjects of it. By the light of nature, and the workings of conscience, especially by the preaching of a revealed law and the gospel of Christ, attended as it usually is by the power of the Holy Spirit, mankind are brought to feel themselves to be wicked. Even the most hard-hearted have seasons of relenting, while the more serious often think of God and are troubled. Few feel *safe* in impenitence, but intend, at least before they die, to take some measures to make their peace with Heaven. Nor is the number small who are actually striving to regain the lost favor of God; striving in their own way, and not in God's way, and so failing; "For I say unto you," said the Saviour, that "many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

Among the means employed by the ancient heathen to obtain peace of conscience, one of the principal was self-torture. They

Digitized by Google

tormented their bodies; they caused their children to pass through blazing fires, and even gave them up as sacrifices to their false deities. Another method, strange as it may seem, was the practice of most abominable debaucheries in honor of their idols. The modern heathens employ similar means. How many millions of children have the crocodiles devoured, and the cruel Ganges! What self-inflicted sufferings are endured every year, all over the heathen world, by those whose distressed consciences seek relief. And this too while they wallow in the pollution of their own lusts, and freely serve devils.

Among the Jews, especially in the times of the Apostles, large multitudes were under conviction of sin. Conscience troubled them, and made them feel worthy of death. How did they seek relief? By going about, says Paul, to establish their own righteousness; by working out for themselves a meritoriousness which might claim heaven of right. They faithfully observed the ceremonies of their law. They offered sacrifices, attended the public festivals, kept many fasts, made long though heartless prayers, and were so scrupulous in paying the tenths to the church, as to tithe every little collection of herbs which had been gathered for family use. They were strict too in keeping the commandments, that is, externally, and as they interpreted them. In the same spirit, they hated the Samaritan and cursed the heathen, and verily thought that they ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Similar remarks might be made of those old Asiatic and European churches which have fallen into decay. They gradually lost the pure gospel, the doctrine of free grace as preached by Paul, and they made salvation depend on man's own doings. Hence auricular confessions, the dreadful system of penances, retirement from the world into cloisters, paying money as an atonement for sins past, or about to be committed.

In all this men are their own saviors. Without attending to God's way of salvation, they go about to establish their own righteousness. Continuing in sin, they do works as an offset; and by voluntary sufferings seek to commend themselves to God.

With some in the Romish Church this disposition to self-righteousness exists in a purer and more refined form. While monasteries are often the abodes of corruption, many sincere men have retired to them, for the sole purpose of becoming holy, by the

Digitized by Google

services performed in them. With a sin-burdened heart, and a desire to commence a godly life, and have peace of mind, they have shut themselves up from society, submitted to hardship, and dedicated their time to prayers, in hopes thereby of finding relief and joy of soul. The greatest of the Reformers in the sixteenth century, is himself an illustration of these remarks. Already partially enlightened by the word of God, and troubled on account of his sins,— he was one day overtaken by a thunder-storm. A bolt fell from the cloud and sunk into the ground, striking down a beloved school-fellow by his side. Not a little terrified, thoughts of appearing before the great and dreadful God in unforgiven sin, took possession of him. After much reflection he makes up his mind to retire from the world. He leaves every thing, and enters the convent at Erfurth. Here he hopes to be with God, to become holy, to find peace. To this end he submits to the humiliations, the hardships, and most degrading drudgeries of the place. The master of arts comes down from his proud station in society, and performs the meanest offices. He is porter, sexton, and servant of the cloister, and when these drudgeries are over, he goes with his bag through the town, to beg bread for the convent. Time would fail us to tell of his fastings, macerations, and watchings. His strugglings against sinful thoughts and inclinations, his prayings, readings, and self-crucifixions, were incessant. They wore upon his health, and reduced him to a skeleton. But still he had no peace. He not only saw immorality in the holy brotherhood around him, but as to himself, with all his rigidness, what was his condition? "No righteousness within: no righteousness in outward action; every where omission of duty; sin, pollution." His efforts and failures plunged him into despair. "I was, in the sight of God," says he, "a great sinner, and could not appease him with my merits." When any new temptations assailed him, he cried out, "I am a lost man! It is in vain," said he, to his friend, "that I make promises to God; sin is always too strong for me." This was the experience of Luther, while trying man's way of salvation, while trying to be his own savior. We shall refer to him again, in speaking of the divine method.

The experience here detailed has its resemblance in many. The shadings are, it is true, different under different times and circumstances, but the substance is the same. There are those in this community who are really working hard to get to heaven.

Digitized by Google

And they are doing it in ways which, apart from the gospel plan of salvation, would seem to be commendable; by cultivating their minds, purifying their tastes, cherishing good feelings, making promises to God, shewing kindnesses to their fellow-beings, and doing good works. While we respect and love them, we also pity them; for they seem to us like the young man in the Gospel, who carefully kept the commandments from his youth up, and yet, so far as we can learn, having an unchanged heart, perished. And this we conceive to be the greatest evil of Unitarianism. Its way of salvation is man's way. Its righteousness is man's righteousness, and not what the Apostle calls the righteousness of God. We speak of the system, not of individuals. But among those who embrace the system, there are many serious minds and kind hearts; many who are really striving to enter into life, but seem not to know the way. They think it is work, hard work, and know not the power of a simple faith. Some of them may have the germs of grace, too, though not often its comforts. And if they could only be brought to lay aside their prejudices, and pride of heart, there is no class of persons who would receive the plan of salvation with more delight.

We find a similar experience among inquirers whose doctrinal principles are right. They always try their own strength, and generally, if truly enlightened into a sense of sin, try it till they despair of themselves, before they lean on Christ. They *do* many things, they are *ready* to do many more. There are persons in our congregations, who would give large sums of money for a good hope; some no doubt who would walk barefooted, like the heathen, over glowing coals to obtain the spiritual good they need. But salvation is not thus to be found. Some twenty years ago, a very near friend of ours, met a former school-mate, who was then an inquirer, at his work in the field. "I have been trying," said the young man, "to become a Christian. I have been reading the Bible, and praying, and trying to think good thoughts; and do not see why I am not better." "But that is not the way," said the other, "that is a kind of Unitarian way." "It *is*," said the young man thoughtfully, "is it?" And then, after a moment's pause, he added, from his own experience of ineffectual struggles: "Well, you make no progress!" Our friend then explained to him God's way, which at last he understood and embraced. The inquirer, after shining for some years

Digitized by Google

as a Christian, died rejoicing in Christ. His then youthful instructor afterwards died three thousand miles from home, and the scene of this conversation, alone and in a foreign land. But he died, as he averred, without one feeling of dissatisfaction with his lot, or one shadow of doubt or fear. Even in hours of loneliness and pain, he could say, that all was bright and cheerful with him, both as respected his present condition and his future prospects. The secret of his soul's comfort was not in himself, though a good, a godly man. It was wholly in Christ.

This brings us to speak of the divine method of salvation. It is Christ, exclusive of all other saviors. For there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved. As respects the ground of our salvation, he saves us without regard to our outward works, or inward corruptions, or hardness of heart, by simple *faith* in him. He is the beginning, middle, and end of our salvation.

Let no one be alarmed, as though we were teaching that a man might live in sin after conversion, and yet be saved by faith. Faith gives to sin a death-blow. "And how can ye," says the Apostle, "being dead to sin, live any longer therein." Believe in Christ, and this belief will be an inward principle of holiness, a living, a working, a fruit-bearing principle. But salvation is not of works, it is all, all of grace,— a gratuity, a free gift. This is what distinguishes the gospel from all other systems of religion. They are all systems of works. Heathenism is a system of works. Judaism, as practised by the mass of the Hebrew nation, is a system of works. Mahometanism is a system of works. Deism is a system of works. The systems of carnal philosophy are systems of works. Corrupt Christianity has also run into the work-system. But the gospel is a system of salvation by faith. The sinner burdened with his sins, and in despair of healing himself, looks unto Christ. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." The dying Israelite looked unto the brazen image, and was restored; for this was the divinely appointed way to save him from natural death: — the sinner looks unto Christ, and lives again; for this is the divinely appointed method of salvation from spiritual death. The sinner goes to Christ just as he is, with all his past sins uncancelled, with a hard, corrupt, and wicked, but now repenting heart, and takes Christ, long freely offered, to be his

Digitized by Google

Saviour. Christ accepts him, gives him a new spirit, and gradually works in him that which is well-pleasing in his sight. The way of salvation is very simple. Christ stands before an assembly of sinners. He promises to save all who will come to him for salvation. All who really desire to be holy, and who believe that he is the Saviour, come and say: "Lord receive me, and do with me what thou wilt!" This simple act of faith is the soul's birth. From that moment we, being justified by faith, have peace with God, and rejoice in his grace. We then have a solid ground of hope, for our hope is not in our own doings, or in what we are, but in Christ.

Holiness and peace can be obtained only by trusting in Christ. Our own righteousnesses, said the prophet, are as filthy rags; — so imperfect, so unsatisfactory, we can place no dependence upon them. The natural heart does not produce holy affections, or really good works. To expect holiness without faith, is to expect that good fruit can be made to grow upon the bitter and crabbed tree of human nature, by mere cultivation, without a vital union to Christ. We cannot attain to peace by looking only upon ourselves. When we have done ever so much, we never can feel that we have done enough to secure God's favor. He is a great God, an awfully just and holy God; and we say with Job, "He is not a man as I am, nor can I come into judgment with him. For if I wash myself with snow-water and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." But the divine way of salvation is altogether different. According to it, our salvation is conditioned entirely on our union to Christ. Whoever trusts Christ, will be saved for Christ's sake. Here we can be confident; here we can stand, and rejoice with the apostle in the hope of glory.

So it was with the Reformer. "I have vowed to the holy God," said his aged instructor, "more than a thousand times, that I would live a holy life, and never have I kept my vow! I make no more vows, for I know well I shall not keep them. If God will not be merciful to me for Christ's sake, I must perish." "Look," continued he, "to the wounds of Jesus. It is there you will see the mercy of God. Instead of torturing yourself for your faults, cast yourself into the arms of Jesus, and love him who first loved you." Luther did thus look, he trusted in Christ, he dared to depend on his mercy, he began to love him; and, through

Digitized by Google

him, to obtain peace and holiness. He was made a new man by simply coming to the conclusion to take Christ at his word, and trust him for salvation, without putting in any goodness of his own. From this time, he could say to sinners: "Despair of your own righteousness; and cry, 'Lord Jesus, thou art my righteousness, I am thy sin. Thou hast taken on thee what was mine, and and hast given me what is thine.'" "I should like," says he to a friend, "to know how it is with your soul. Is it weary of its own righteousness? Does it trust in the righteousness of Christ?" So fearful was he of this miserable, soul-destroying self-righteousness, as even to warn others to beware of seeking after *such* purity as not to acknowledge themselves sinners. "For Christ," says he, "dwells only with sinners, real, actual, sinners." "He came from Heaven to dwell with sinners." "If our labors and afflictions could give peace of conscience," he continues, "why did Christ die upon the cross? You will find peace in him alone; despairing of yourself, and of your works, and beholding with what love he spreads his arms to you; taking all your sins on himself, and bestowing on you all his righteousness." This was the great doctrine of the Reformation, — The nothingness of man, the fulness of Christ; the utter insufficiency of ourselves, the all-sufficiency of the Saviour.

God brings salvation to us as utterly lost, utterly destitute of any power of saving ourselves, and utterly unable to do any thing meritorious except in Christ, and as he strengthens us. These sentiments are beautifully expressed in our sacred hymn.

"No works, no duties of your own,
Can for the smallest sin atone;
The robes which nature may provide,
Will not your least pollutions hide.

"The softest couch which nature knows
Can give the conscience no repose.
Look to my righteousness and live;
Comfort and peace are mine to give."

Grace, grace, unearned, unbought, undeserved by man, and freely bestowed by God, salvation by grace without works, justification by faith, this is the doctrine which shook all Europe, and was to thousands as the trump which wakes the dead. This doctrine is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them who are called, it is the power and the wisdom of God.

Digitized by Google

We wish we could express the joy and courage with which this idea of salvation wholly by Christ inspires us. Embracing it as a revealed doctrine, the natural spirit of fear, bondage, and aversion to a holy God, is changed into a spirit of hope, freedom, and love. We breathe freely. We feel safe and happy in Christ. The thunder-cloud has passed over; and when we look up, all the stars appear. We work now, not with the executioner's halter about our neck, — for there is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, — but in a confident liberty. We are willing to work as hard as the hardest, not, as slaves, through fear of the lash; not as servants, hired for reward; but as grateful friends, actuated by love. If we may be saved by Christ, we are are willing, nay, desirous to throw in all the work we can do, and think ourselves well repaid if the Master will receive it as a token of gratitude at our hands. We are encouraged also to strive after holiness, both because it seems in itself desirable, and because it is pleasing to Christ. He that hath this hope, purifieth himself even as He is pure.

If the eyes of any burdened with a sense of sin should fall on these pages, we say to them, If you would have peace of mind, if you would have spiritual courage; if you would attain to holiness, no longer "go about to establish your own righteousness," but submit yourselves to "the righteousness of God." This righteousness is Christ. Believe in him. Receive him as your complete and only Saviour. Trust him heartily and without any misgiving. The moment you rely upon any thing of your own as necessary to help out the Saviour's work, you expose yourself to uncertainty and discouragement if not to despair. Accept salvation as wholly a gratuity from beginning to end. Turn from man's way of salvation, so natural to the unenlightened mind, and take the divine method, and your peace will be as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea. You cannot be freed from bondage by any mere workings and strivings of your own. Like some captive bird fluttering and beating against the wires of its cage till its little breast is covered with gore, you, bound fast in the prison-house of sin, cannot escape; and your very strugglings seem but to wound and weaken you. But trust in Christ, and this simple faith will remove the iron bars, and your liberated spirit will mount the free air, and sing for joy.

Digitized by Google

A SOUND MIND.

Opposed to rashness or blind passion, to obstinacy and imbecility, a sound mind takes a wary and circumspect survey of its condition and surrounding influences before making its decisions, and then moves steadily forward to the accomplishment of its purposes.

More particularly, it is, first of all, an *intelligent* mind. Ignorance of what ought to be known, it regards as a misfortune and a sin. Its high aim is to increase in the knowledge of whatsoever it is important to know. True, indeed, one may have much more learning than another, and yet have a mind far less sound. There are those who have received what is termed a liberal education, who are nevertheless exceedingly deficient in common sense, and exhibit less good judgment and practical sagacity than others whose educational advantages have been limited to the district school. Now this is no argument against learning. It only shews that some minds are so constituted or trained, that learning does not make them wise. Other things being equal, he is most to be relied on for counsel, who has learned the most. An intelligent view of what belongs to our circumstances and duties is indispensable alike to wise decision and prudent action.

Again; a sound mind is one *whose powers are well-balanced.* It is neither all intellect, nor all heart, nor all will. The appetites are not allowed to usurp dominion over the reason, nor the passions to blind the eye or silence the remonstrances of conscience. The inferior powers are made to perform their offices as intended by the Creator. Exercised and gratified to the extent, and in the manner, which reason and conscience approve, they are not allowed to intrude into their higher spheres, and thus derange the whole intellectual economy. The powers of perception, memory, imagination, and judgment, all have their appropriate work, and perform it in harmony. They attempt neither to jostle each other from their places, nor to interfere with the regular operation of other powers. The conscience sits as umpire to decide on the moral quality of actions, and approve or disapprove as the case may require; and neither fear nor favor, neither partiality nor prejudice, is allowed to blind her eye or bias her decisions. The affections are called into exercise

Digitized by Google

by their appropriate objects; and the will determines, and puts in operation all the forces within and without, in obedience to right and duty. This nice adjustment of the mental powers to each other, this entire harmony of their interdependence, is characteristic of the sound mind. Nor is this all.

The sound mind looks at things without in their *several relations and just proportions*. There are some eyes, it is said, that cannot distinguish red from blue. There are some ears which recognize no difference between a sharp and a flat, a harsh and a soft tone. So there are minds which seem to have no power of nice discrimination, no appreciation of social and moral harmony in them. They look at objects in the mass, having no faculty, or at least no disposition, to distinguish things. Give them a proposition in morals or religion, and they will make sad havoc with it, for want of power or will properly to limit and wisely to apply it. They appear to forget that in morals, as in natural science, one law is limited by another, and one truth must be made to harmonize with other truths. The man of sound mind is careful always to remember this. He regards circumstances, time, place, occasion. He contemplates the points of moral and religious truth not only as they are in themselves, absolutely, but also in their relations to each other. The light radiating from each, is modified by reflections from other points. The rays sometimes cross each other at different angles; and a wise man appreciates the general result, as well as each particular ray. He takes large and generous views of conduct, principles, and events. You cannot persuade him that he understands a subject, until he has examined it on every side, and noted its more important bearings upon associated subjects. Some men catch a glimpse of a truth on one side; and because that side appears clear and well defined, they fancy that they are possessed of the whole. This imaginary knowledge, equivalent in the circumstances to real ignorance, often makes strange work with morals, and leads to conduct directly at variance with common sense and Scripture. Not so the man of sober mind. In all matters of importance he deliberates carefully, and examines critically; and reaches conclusions, it may be, long after another, but as much more safe as he was longer in arriving at them.

Once more; a sound mind is one that *responds promptly to the call of duty*. Whenever a man sees clearly what duty demands,

Digitized by Google

and yet hesitates, through fear or selfish interests, to obey that demand, it is quite certain that he has not all the attributes of a sound mind. He may have a strong mind, keen discernment, uncommon learning, and superior reasoning powers; but one of the most important elements of a sound mind is wanting. To use an expressive phrase, borrowed from physical science, "a screw is loose." He is not to be relied upon by others; he ought not to rely upon himself. He is liable to be tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, and subjects himself to all the uncertainties and dangers of life's deceitful sea. It is certainly the most consummate discretion, to obey with alacrity the call of duty whenever it is uttered, and wherever it leads the way. With such a mind, a man will be quick to ascertain, and prompt to yield to, the moral obligations arising from his position and relations. "Lord, what will thou have me to do,"—is his earnest prayer; "I delight to do thy will, O my God,"—is the habitual utterance of his heart.

Such, in brief, is a sound mind. We proceed now to institute an inquiry respecting its value. Is it a possession of any considerable importance? What effect will it have upon our decisions and deportment? Will it increase our influence in society, and also improve the quality of that influence? Is there a value to be attached to it so great as to warrant the most earnest endeavors after its attainment, and stamp with prëeminent folly the carelessness which neglects it?

It will, doubtless, be admitted, that such an acquisition is valuable. It does not cost much to make this admission. It is something, though not much, to wish that a high moral and intellectual attainment were our own; but it is altogether a different thing to change that wish into a solemn resolve that, with the blessing of heaven, it shall be ours; and then by patient continuance in well-doing, convert the resolution into a practical reality, and insure large measures of spiritual sobriety and divine wisdom.

A sound mind is the antagonist of fear and trepidation. Begetting a calm and equable temperature of soul, it is opposed to all passionate and inconsiderate action. Securing the respect and confidence of others, it contributes directly and efficiently to a healthful influence in society. Harmonizing the elements of character with each other, and with outward relations, it tends to produce a likeness to Christ. Prompting to a faithful perform-

Digitized by Google

ance of all duty, it prepares for the most glorious rewards of heaven. "God hath not given unto us the spirit of fear, but of a sound mind." The latter is the opposite of the former. The prevalence of the one, is the destruction of the other. The spirit of a sound mind is a spirit of trust, of unshaken confidence in the power, presence, and goodness of God. By turning the eye of the soul upon the overruling providence of Jehovah, and lifting the heart in faith to Him "who doeth all things well," it casteth out all unmanly and slavish fear. Void of this trust, man may well tremble and be dismayed. He "finds himself dependent for happiness upon circumstances entirely beyond his control, and his best calculated hopes exposed to wreck from a thousand contingencies, which he can neither foresee nor prevent. If he have not a friend in the Supreme Disposer of all events, and an assured prospect of a better immortality, fear will be constantly present with him. His gods are upon earth. Children and friends, riches and worldly distinction, are sources to which he looks for happiness. Take these away, and what has he left?" He will, therefore, be anxious and troubled. Fear lest these, his gods should be removed, lest himself should be dashed down by death, and forced away from them all, into that world of retribution whither he has nothing to carry but the guilt of his sins, will be fatal to all stability and peace of mind, and productive of sore dismay.

The spirit of a sound mind prevents all this. It seeks for and finds a higher good than this world can afford; takes into view man's whole career, and "calmly reposes on God for light in the dark hour, and rest in the storm." He who fears God in the cordial belief of his gospel, has nothing else to fear. He resolutely closes his heart to all unmanly misgivings. "The Lord is his light and his salvation; whom shall he fear? The Lord is the strength of his life; of whom shall he be afraid?" "What energy of purpose, what indomitable will, what calm confidence in the result, must he have, who is thus girded about by omnipotence, guided by omniscience; and bound, as it were, by his faith and love, to the will of Jehovah himself." Who, then, can fully express the value of that state of mind which we are now considering? In such a world as ours, with so much to perplex and annoy, with so many enemies to our peace, with so many liabilities to err and to fall, with such constant inroads of fear on

Digitized by Google

the right and on the left, and withal, so weak and frail as we are in ourselves,— how invaluable is that frame of mind which lifts our heads above the billows, and enables us, with undoubting confidence in God, to survey the present and anticipate the future.

Fear thus prevented, a calm and equable temperature of the soul is begotten. You would judge, from the mode of action adopted by some, that the world was made in a day, and that all we do here should be done in a hurry. Admit that we ought always to abound in the work of the Lord, and you do not quite satisfy them. It is not quite enough for them apparently, that you believe in doing with all your might what your hands find to do. You must do it even faster than that. They repudiate the maxim of making haste slowly. They would, in every good work, make haste hastily. In a sense which practically denies the teachings of history, and contradicts the principles on which the world is governed, they are immediatists. In their estimate of the best mode of working reforms, circumstances, existing states of mind, inveterate habits, causes that render it impossible in the nature of things to make radical changes in a moment, are overlooked. Fastening their eye with intense desire upon an end, they are not careful to appreciate the difficulties to be overcome, nor the resources to be called into requisition, before that end can be accomplished. When they speak of existing evils, it is with an impatient feeling that they must all be done away in a moment. Their arguments and persuasions are based more on what could be done were man what he should be, than on what can be done now, taking man as he is. Hence they are as ineffective, as they are bustling.

Now this perturbation of spirit, and rashness of action are carefully avoided by a person of sound mind. Taking just views of men and things, he will not give heed to rash counsels, nor hastily adopt opinions that have the semblance of good. He looks at means as well as ends. He will not, by unwise haste to secure a present inferior good, sacrifice an end, which, though distant, is incomparably more valuable. How much soever he may deplore existing evils, and how ardently soever he may desire their removal, he will not, by bursts of passion or impulses of fury, really add to their power, and prolong their dominion.

The spirit of a sound mind exerts a healthful and powerful influence in society. Its possessor may not make so much dis-

Digitized by Google

play as some others. He may be retiring and unostentatious. He may not talk so loudly about reforms in social customs and in morals, as some of his neighbors. But his influence for good will be felt far more deeply and extensively. In times of difficulty, many eyes will be turned towards him for relief. In seasons of perplexity and fear, his counsels for guidance will be eagerly sought, and promptly followed. Neglected as he may be when all is joyous and prosperous, he will be sought for and honored when any pressing or unforeseen emergency arises. Your man of real courage always shews himself when danger is imminent, and the coward heart is paralyzed with dismay. So in the great crises of social, civil, and religious life, the man of practical sagacity and true wisdom rises to view, and shews his inherent energy, and conservative power.

Nor is it alone in the great and startling events of life, that he performs his mission of mercy. As a neighbor, friend, and citizen, he will shew that he understands his relative duties, and do good unto all as he has opportunity. At an equal remove from lethargy on the one hand, and rash zeal on the other, he will move along with the energy of a calm and benevolent purpose. If he have less of the dash and noise of the land-flood, he has more of the steady and beneficent flow of the perennial stream. His is the influence which belongs to weight of character, in distinction from that which arises from sudden impulse or spasmodic effort.

Every careful observer has had occasion to mark this distinction. There are some persons who do well enough to amuse a leisure hour, but you would neither select them for intimate friends nor rely upon them in any serious emergency. They have but little stability of purpose, or strength of principle, or weight of character. There are others who say less; but they think more. By patient examination of principles, and practical skill in the application of those principles to existing events, they have established a reputation for good sense and sound judgment. They thus stand on vantage ground, high and lifted up, far above the region where petty minds are tossed hither and thither by petty difficulties. Now it is this established reputation for wisdom, this weight of character, that gives a man his most extensive and durable influence in society. He is thus enabled to speak when others keep silence; and to act wisely and beneficently, when others halt in indecision, or are inactive from despair. Thus

Digitized by Google

most faithfully he serves God and his generation, and makes himself most sincerely regretted when he dies. Thus he aids in filling those moral channels, which, becoming broader and deeper as the years roll on, shall eventually carry the tide of salvation around the globe.

Surely this is to be like Christ, and one in spirit with all who have done most for the progress of our race in knowledge and holiness. It is also to prepare the soul for the glorious rewards of heaven. On these two points we might dwell for hours with interest and profit, but our limited space will permit no more than this bare statement of them. Let the reader give them that serious thought which their importance demands; and, under the influence of all the motives above suggested, come to the question, How can the sound mind be obtained?

Originally, all minds are the creation of God. For every power we have, we are indebted to him, as also for the means of improving every power. Doubtless each one is differently endowed as he comes from the forming hand of God, and no cultivation can make two in all respects alike. But all who have the elementary powers of a human being, and certainly all who are living under the light of the gospel, may make attainments in practical wisdom. They may do this by earnest prayer to the mind's Author. The greatest minds that ever existed, have been the most humble and prayerful. They have brought their talents and learning, and laid them upon the altar of God, as a living sacrifice. They have practically exemplified the sentiment, that "prayer is the only true life." This spirit of prayer has been at once an evidence of a sound mind, and also an efficient means of its continuance and increase. There is something essentially unsound in a prayerless spirit. An intelligent, well-balanced, conscientious, and truly wise mind, without reverence and devotion to God, is a contradiction in terms.

Prayer alone, however, will not meet all the exigencies of the case. God has not arranged his system of creation in such a manner as to supersede the necessity of earnest endeavor on our part. We know not what he might have done, having power to accomplish every thing within the limits of possibility; but his revealed plan is, that man shall make well-directed efforts in order to obtain any valuable blessings. Wisdom was not born with us, nor does it come to us unsought. It lies clearly within our reach;

Digitized by Google

but close observation, careful analysis, and patient study, are indispensable to its actual possession. The grand reason why one man is wise and another unwise is not, that they were born with essentially different faculties. Nor is it because one was placed in circumstances which made it impossible for him to improve his mind, while the other was so situated that wisdom came unsought. It is because one has labored assiduously to add to his knowledge, and improve his talents; while the other, sluggish, or sensual, or vain, has neglected to rectify his mistakes, supply his deficiencies, and enlarge the sphere of his observation. Let a man make the word of God his study, let him take its great principles as the guide of his life, carefully noting the events of divine Providence, and praying for divine illumination, and he will be continually correcting whatever is wayward and rash in his tendencies, and increasing that wise foresight, and conscientious regard for the just and true, which are the prime elements of a sound mind. Whatever apparent exceptions there may be to this statement, such, past all question, is the rule. If we seek, we shall find. He that "cries after knowledge and lifts up his voice for understanding; who seeks her as silver, and searches for her as for hid treasures, shall understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

WESTERN REMINISCENCES.

THE following letter, addressed to one of the editors of this periodical, contains some interesting fragments of history in East Tennessee, and is adapted to encourage ministers and private Christians in the humblest efforts they may make for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom. It illustrates the promise, "My word shall not return unto me void." The author has just published an interesting volume, entitled the Pilgrimage of Adam and David, a notice of which will be found in our concluding pages. He is also preparing, as we understand, sketches of the West. From his long residence in different portions of that great country, his happy talent at description, and the valuable incidents he has treasured up, we shall look forward to the appearance of the

Digitized by Google

sketches with great interest. In the mean while, our readers will be gratified with the account which this letter contains of the influence of Dr. Emmons's writings in Tennessee, and the abundant good which seems to have resulted from the labors and prayers of a few godly women in Connecticut.

BOSTON, JULY 23, 1849.

BROTHER STEARNS:

Since my visit to New England, I have been led to review pages in the precious book of providence, recording facts which have deeply impressed my own mind; and, peradventure, the communication of them to the public may favorably affect the minds of others.

It is now more than thirty years, since Dr. Anderson of Maryville, Tennessee, put into my hands a volume containing the Sermons of Nathanael Emmons, D.D., of Franklin, Mass. The book was open as he gave it to me, and his finger pointed to the sermon on the language of Joseph to his brethren: — "Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." I had never before heard the author's name, and knew nothing of his character or history. But I commenced reading, and at once was charmed with the clearness, accuracy, and precision of his style; and delighted with his full, rich, transparent tide of thought. I soon made arrangements to procure for myself, and to circulate among my people, the works of this able and instructive theologian. I sent to W. W. Woodward of Philadelphia, and obtained through him the volumes containing the sermons of Emmons, some of which, I remember, had been published by Samuel T. Armstrong of Boston. Other ministers in East Tennessee did in like manner. Thus the writings of Dr. Emmons were extensively circulated, and attentively read by ministers and church-members through a large district of country. Very many of the *early* settlers in the West, were religious men, I allude to those who settled in Tennessee and Kentucky sixty and seventy years ago. They had the Holy Scriptures among them, also the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly, and the Sermons of Davies, Doddridge, Whitfield, Bellamy, Edwards, and others. Yet both ministers and people united in esteeming the sermons of Emmons as a most valuable addition to their theological literature.

Digitized by Google

Lest I should be misapprehended, however, allow me to remark, that neither our ministers nor our people thought of ascribing to Dr. Emmons the accuracy of inspiration. They well knew, that absolute perfection is the attribute of but one book — the Book of God. Nor did they at all sympathize with those who shut their eyes against the lovely light of day, because they suspect, forsooth, that there may be here and there a dim or a dark spot on the surface of the sun. Many of these precious people, and many of these precious ministers, are now gone "to the city of the living God." And I but "speak what I know, and testify what I have seen," when bearing witness that the divine truth embodied in the sermons of Dr. Emmons cheered and strengthened many of their hearts while they were journeying through this dark world. I wish here to give, more particularly, one specification.

The doctrine of the certain and final perseverance of the saints, was esteemed among this people, a very delightful Bible doctrine. They thought it was clearly taught in the Word of God. And they wished to derive from it that encouragement, and that consolation which it is calculated to impart. But this doctrine was violently assailed by persons who denounced it as both false and dangerous. And the great argument on which its opponents relied, was this: The certain perseverance of the saints in holiness, unto eternal life, is inconsistent with the exhortations, warnings, and cautions addressed to Christians in the Scriptures. Said the objector: "If there is a *certainty* that the saint will persevere in holiness, then such warnings and exhortations are idle and useless." Now it was at a period, when there was much discussion and much feeling on this subject, that the sermon of Emmons came to hand, on the text,— "Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." He shewed with the conclusiveness of demonstration, that in this case, there was a *previous certainty* that Paul and his shipmates would come safe to land. For when their prospect was darkest, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said: "Now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship; for there stood by me this night, the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall

Digitized by Google

be even as it was told me." But, soon afterwards, when the sailors were about to flee out of the ship, "Paul said to the centurion, and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, in which the sailors designed to escape, and let her fall; the sailors, remaining in the ship, employed their skill in managing the vessel, "And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land." The warning of Paul was necessary and important, the exertion of the sailors was essential to their safety, and yet all this was in perfect agreement with "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," that there should be "no loss of any man's life." The exhortation of Paul answered a most valuable purpose, and was a necessary link in the great plan of God. So in the delightful Scripture doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. The word of God is: "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." And O how firm is the word of God! "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand forever." Now the warnings given to Christians, are just as consistent with the certainty of *their* salvation, and just as important and necessary links in the great chain of God's counsels, as was the warning of Paul to the centurion and the soldiers. Or, to take another illustration; the warnings given to Christians, are just as important as the warning given to Joseph by the angel of God: "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him;" while it was *certain* that the time of Messiah's death was more than thirty years distant, and that "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him." Who will say that this warning of the angel was *useless?* or *unimportant?* or *inconsistent* with the other declarations of God?

To those who delight to "dig deep" into the great doctrines of revelation, and lay the foundation of their hope "on a rock," a clear, satisfactory view of the connection and consistency of high momentous truths in the scheme of redemption is like "rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Now, in imparting aid to Christians in this respect, no sermons written since the days of inspiration, have been so extensively useful, for the last thirty years, in the wide

Digitized by Google

region of which I have spoken, as the sermons of Dr. Emmons. On reaching Boston two months ago, I was informed that the widow of Dr. Emmons was yet living in the country, some ten miles distant from the city. I soon had an opportunity, through the polite attentions of her son, of making her a visit. Though at the advanced age of eighty-six, she was cheerful, communicative, and seemed to be in the full enjoyment of her mental faculties. She spoke with much interest of her departed husband, and said that she was happy to see any one who had a regard for his memory. I told her that I had long cherished an exalted esteem for the great and good man who was once her husband, and asked her if Dr. Emmons ever knew, during his life, that his sermons were widely circulated in the State of Tennessee? And that they were considered as the instruments of very great blessings to the church of God in that country? She replied that she was quite confident that he never knew it. On hearing this statement from that venerable woman, I was deeply affected in view of the mysterious and wonderful ways of God. Ah, we but "know in part," in the present life. What rich and rapturous disclosures await the faithful servant of God when he enters eternity!

These sermons helped to quicken the Christian mind of East Tennessee, and prepare the good people of that region for the great mercies the Lord had in store for them. These will appear in connection with another train of facts, which I have been led to review, since my visit to the East.

There existed some twenty-five years ago, in the State of Connecticut, an association of pious females, called "The Tolland County Revival Society." That society, about the year 1825, sent an excellent man, who was also a worthy minister, to labor among the churches in East Tennessee. This minister was Nicholas Patterson. He had been, I think, for a considerable time associated with Rev. Asahel Nettleton. Why those pious sisters sent this brother to Tennessee, rather than to another field, I never knew. But he was an able minister of the New Testament, and he was most cordially received by the churches in that part of our Lord's vineyard. About nine years before his arrival, I had commenced preaching at Rogersville, Tennessee, where in a village numbering a population of four hundred, there was not one professor of religion,— not a Baptist, not a Methodist, not a Presbyterian; for this county had been much neglected, and

Digitized by Google

was a wild waste, while other counties contained churches of thirty years standing. But at the time of Mr. Patterson's arrival, two churches had been formed in that county. One at the village, or county seat, the other thirteen miles distant; and the two churches embraced above three hundred members. This may be taken as a tolerably fair specimen of the state of the church, in that section of our country. In some counties the number of church-members was greater, in some, not so great; but perhaps the above is near the average. Many of our preachers had the charge of two churches, some of three, and some even of four. Among these ministers, there were many strong men; men who were "mighty in the Scriptures;" men, the joy and rejoicing of whose heart it was, to unfold to listening multitudes, the sublime truths of "the everlasting gospel." Often, while listening to the rich discourses which they gave, concerning Christ and the great salvation, have I found myself instructed, encouraged, and my heart "lifted up in the ways of the Lord;" often have I felt the obligation to praise God for the institution of a standing ministry, and the divine ordinance, that the gospel shall be *preached* to all nations, and preached to the end of the world. When the English bishop asked the Welch minister "What kind of preaching do you have in Wales?" "We have very good preaching," was the modest reply. "What!" said the bishop, "I know you are famous for jumping in Wales, but I did not know that it was owing to the kind of preaching you have." "Ah, you would jump too," said the Welshman, "if you could only hear such preaching."

Repeatedly, has this anecdote occurred to my mind, when I have listened to the preaching of such pulpit orators, as Isaac Anderson, John McCampbell, Frederic A. Ross, David Nelson, author of the "Cause and Cure of Infidelity," and other men of the same class. Now, such was the description of preachers among whom this brother Patterson found himself, when he arrived in Tennessee. And though they were "workmen that needed not to be ashamed," yet, Mr. Patterson, having labored with Nettleton, and other successful ministers at the East, had much knowledge and experience, that was of great value to the ministers in Tennessee. "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser." It is a proof of true wisdom to be willing to learn.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Patterson proposed what was called the "twilight concert of prayer for the revival of religion." Most of the churches throughout all that country, entered into an agreement to observe this twilight concert of prayer. Where the family could come together at that hour, they would then have their evening worship, and in that exercise, pray particularly for the revival of the cause of God, and the conversion of sinners. When it was not convenient to call the family together, each one, in his closet, or on his journey, or wherever he might be, alone would lift up his earnest prayers to God, for the salvation of souls. Thus, over a wide land, from evening to evening, a vast volume of prayer for showers of divine mercy, went up to the throne of God.

The preaching of Mr. Patterson, was plain, solemn, powerful, and aimed to convert men to God. He preached with *expectation*,— as one who expected that God would hear prayer, expected that God would accompany his preaching with the energies of the divine Spirit, expected that sinners would take the warning, and flee from the wrath to come. And this holy, heaven-born expectation, which so remarkably characterized the labors of that beloved brother, was diffused abroad. Other ministers now preached with expectation, leaning on the covenant promises of God. The church also, in the name of her great Redeemer, drew near, and took hold of the promise and the oath of God, "that by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, she might have strong consolation." The consequence was, that the windows of heaven were opened, showers of salvation came down, and the wilderness, and the solitary place were made to bloom and rejoice, as the garden of the Lord. Every church that entered into this concert of prayer shared in the divine blessing; and every church visited by Mr. Patterson was greatly strengthened by the encouragement of its minister, and the increase of its members. The two churches of which I was then the pastor, were nearly doubled in their numbers, and altogether doubled in their strength, during the two years that he remained among us. But the entire result can be never be known, until "the Lord himself shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this and that man was born there."

This revival continued for a long season, with power and great glory, in the State of Tennessee, and some of the results, after a lapse of more than twenty years, we are now able to specify.

Digitized by Google

Very many souls were savingly converted to God. Among these, quite a large number were middle-aged men, business men, professional men, and men whose weight in society was great, and whose lives ever afterwards were to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Many infidels were brought to renounce their infidelity, and turn to the Lord. Dr. Nelson, in his work on Infidelity, has given the public an account of the kind of skepticism which had polluted portions of the West, at an early day. Many of these victims were rescued from the destroyer. Dr. Nelson himself, was converted before the revival that accompanied and followed the labors of Mr. Patterson; but many of his former associates were now brought to the Redeemer's feet, and he was made to realize that it was now his duty to "preach that Gospel which once he destroyed." Without the influence that was brought to bear on him during this revival, it is more than doubtful whether Dr. Nelson would ever have been a preacher; and whether his admirable work on infidelity would ever have blessed the world.

Near the close of the year 1827, Dr. Nelson was called to take the pastoral care of the church at Danville, Kentucky. One of our young ministers, from East Tennessee, accompanied, or soon followed him. This was William G. Gallaher, now pastor of a church near Jacksonville, Illinois. This young man, then in feeble health, travelled over a considerable portion of the State of Kentucky, preached as he was able, and made known to the churches there, how the Lord had heard prayer, and blessed the labors of his servants in Tennessee. "Then were the disciples glad." Many of the churches in Kentucky united in the twilight concert; they also wrote letters to Tennessee, desiring Rev. Frederic A. Ross, and another brother to visit them early the next Spring, and assist them in the cause of God. On Friday before the first Sabbath in May, 1828, Mr. Ross and his friend met some of those Kentucky brethren at Richmond, in Madison county. It was a precious season,—a day of the right hand of the Most High. "And the lofty looks of men were humbled, and the haughtiness of men was bowed down, and the Lord alone was exalted in that day." Their meeting continued four days. Then, accompanied by a number of the brethren, they proceeded to Lancaster, and preached there. Then to Danville, to Nicolasville, Lexington, Paris, Cynthiana, Mt. Pleasant, Springfield,

Digitized by Google

Flemingsburg, Maysville, Louisville, Frankfort, and other important points. They preached from four to six days, at each of these places. Many persons came from a distance to attend the meetings, and many were turned to the Lord. It is now twenty-one years, since that series of efforts, and I have, during this long period, while travelling up and down in the great West, had reason to rejoice at the frequency with which I have met with those who then were born of God. Scarcely have I visited a town, or an extensive neighborhood in any of the Western States, within the last twenty years, but I have found "burning and shining lights" in the Christian church, who dated their conversion, from that blessed outpouring of the Spirit of God, in 1828. Let me give one example out of many.

A few years ago, I had been to visit my aged parents in Illinois. It was during the severity of winter. The Mississippi was frozen over. I had crossed it on the ice; and when about fifteen miles from the river, night was approaching, and I stopped near a house which I had never seen before. While I was fastening my horse, the landlord came out, and exclaimed: — "Ah! I know you! come in, come in." I could not identify him as an acquaintance, but he inquired: "Do not you remember the meeting at Mt. Pleasant, in Kentucky, in the year 1828?"

"Yes, I remember it well."

"Well, sir, I was ploughing in a field at a distance from the church. I had no thought of going to the meeting; but while I was ploughing, I heard the congregation at the church singing these lines:

'In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I 'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much-loved saints,
For I must go with you.'

I immediately took my horse from the plough, went to the house, changed my clothes, and came right to the church; and at that time gave my heart to God. My aged father also joined with me, on that occasion, in a public profession of Christ as our Saviour; and we are now both hoping for eternal life." Such was the statement of this plain, pious man, and such is a sample of the fruits of the revival of 1828, with which I have been meeting for the last twenty years.

Digitized by Google

While Mr. Ross and his friend were laboring in Kentucky, Dr. Joshua L. Wilson wrote a letter inviting and urging them to come to Cincinnati. They accepted his urgent invitation. At Cincinnati, the work of God's Spirit was marvellously extensive and glorious. In the space of six weeks, about six hundred persons professed conversion to God, in the congregations connected with the Presbyterian church; and other denominations also, were greatly blessed. It was, perhaps, the most powerful revival that I have ever witnessed. Soon after this, that beautiful building occupied by the second Presbyterian Church was erected, the third presbyterian church was formed, and then the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth. One of those brethren from Tennessee, became pastor of the third church, and soon after he became a trustee of the Lane Seminary. He introduced in the Board of trustees, the resolution, to call Dr. Beecher to the presidency of the Lane Seminary; and he, as the officiating member of that Board, inducted Dr. Beecher into the office which he now holds in that institution. A tide of holy influence has gone forth from that seminary, and already extended afar. A tide also of good, from the lives of those who were converted in those mighty revivals, has already blessed the souls of many. How wide those streams may spread, how far their waves may roll, before the trump of God shall stop the march of time, neither man nor angel can tell. But, already, we can see enough to awake the exclamation, "Blessed are they who are permitted to be workers together with God! Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

Now observe, all these immense results can be traced to the mission of Nicholas Patterson from Connecticut to Tennessee, as unquestionably as you can trace the channel of the Ohio river from Pittsburg to Cincinnati. Had not those pious sisters sent that man of God to the West, that concert of prayer would not have been entered into by the churches. Without prayer, that revival would not have come; without that revival, Dr. Nelson would not have been *constrained* (for it was a tremendous struggle,) to abandon the profitable practice of medicine, and enter the ministry, in a country where privation and penury stared him in the face. Had he not entered the ministry, it is next to certain, his book on infidelity would never have been written. Had he

Digitized by Google

not entered the ministry, he would not have been called to Kentucky, to the Danville church. Then, there is no likelihood that the young brother would have gone and travelled through that State, introducing the concert of prayer, and making known the wonders of God's grace in the neighboring State. In that event, Mr. Ross, and his friend, would not have been invited to visit the churches in Kentucky. Had they not gone to Kentucky, they would not have been invited to Cincinnati. The great revival in Cincinnati, so far as their agency was the instrument, would not have taken place. The beautiful building for the second Presbyterian Church would not have been erected at the time it was. Dr. Beecher would not have been called to that church, in connection with the Lane Seminary, nor would the Lane Seminary have been established, certainly at that time. A host of young ministers now in the field, and that multitude of converted souls, "that long cloud of witnesses" would not have been raised up to bless the church of God, in those wide-spread regions of the West.

How little did these sisters know what they were doing, when they sent their missionary to the West. Rev. Mr. Calhoun, of Coventry, in a letter to a clergyman in Boston, speaking of the Tolland County Revival Society, says: — "The society embraced many of the most intelligent and devoted females in the county; and the annual meetings of that society, were of peculiar interest. It is affecting to me, to call them to remembrance." Should any of them be yet living, and should their eyes light on these pages, I will say to such, in the language of the queen of Sheba, "Behold, the half has not been told you." Wait for the clearer light, and the more perfect disclosures of eternity, and in the meantime, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

I am, Dear Brother,
Yours affectionately,
JAMES GALLAHER.

Digitized by Google

THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

In examining the history of our Lord, and the doctrines of his apostles concerning him, we find him presented to us under two distinct and opposite aspects. He was born in Bethlehem, in the days of king Herod; and yet he existed before Abraham, was in glory with God the Father, before the world was, was in the beginning of all things with God, and could use without impropriety concerning his existence, the absolute expression, "I am," as if he had no origin. He was omniscient, and yet he knew not the day and hour of the final judgment; — omniscient before all worlds, and yet grew in knowledge from an infant's ignorance. He was on earth, and yet in heaven. He claimed equality with God his Father; and yet said: "My Father is greater than I." He was a servant, and yet Lord of all; David's Lord, yet David's Son; of the seed of Abraham as concerning the flesh, yet over all God blessed forever; the proper object of unlimited confidence, yet of a race, of whom a prophet had said, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm."

The question arises, How shall these apparent contradictions be reconciled? The Socinian replies, that the terms of exaltation are metaphorical, and that Jesus Christ, as to his nature, is a true man; but that as to his office, as the chosen Son of God, and Redeemer of the world, he is exalted to a dignity which, in a free use of the figure hyperbole, allows us to ascribe to him divine attributes. The Arian, who can by no means bring his mind to regard the Saviour of the world as simply human, endeavors to reconcile the opposite representations, by abating something on *both* sides, on the score of figurative language. Jesus Christ was, properly speaking, neither man nor God, being exalted by his nature inconceivably above the one; and yet, as having a derived existence, being infinitely inferior to the other: but figuratively, he might, very suitably, be called either. The Sabellian rejects both these explanations. The Godhead of our Lord, he regards as true and proper divinity, — divinity in the highest possible sense. The humanity, likewise, he admits to be a true and proper humanity. But he rejects the supposition of a personal union between them, maintaining only a very intimate connection.

Digitized by Google

Against all these theories, serious objections may be discovered. They cannot be maintained, without doing violence to the language of the Scriptures, endangering the exclusiveness of the Divine prerogative, and depriving our blessed Lord of some most essential qualifications for the work assigned him. Hence the church has not hesitated to discard them, as alike unsound.

The doctrine generally received, may be exhibited by a few extracts from standard formularies. The words of the Athanasian creed are as follows: "For the right faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man; God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the world; and man of the substance of his mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man; of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching his manhood. Who although he be God and man, yet is he not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking the manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." The second of the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, is thus expressed: "The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and the manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried," etc. The Westminster Assembly employ this form: "Who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person forever." In reply to the question, "*How* did the Son of God become man?"—they declare it to have been "by taking upon himself a true body and a reasonable soul." The fifteenth article of the Reformed Churches in France, is the following: "We believe that in one and the same person, to wit, the Lord Jesus Christ, his two natures are truly and inseparably conjoined and united; yet nevertheless in such a manner, that each nature doth retain its distinct properties. So that even as in this divine conjunction, the divine nature, retaining its properties,

Digitized by Google

doth still abide uncreated, infinite, and filling all places, so also the human nature remaineth finite, having its form, measure, and property. And although the Lord Jesus Christ, when he rose from the dead, did give immortality unto his body, yet he never deprived it of the verity of its nature. Therefore we do so consider Christ in his Deity, that we do not spoil him of his humanity."

The doctrine taught in common by these formularies, is briefly this: That in Christ there are two distinct and complete natures, the human and the divine, so united, as without confusion or composition, to be one and the same person. To this doctrine, the church generally has, in all ages, steadily adhered.

Various attempts have been made at modification. Apollinaris denied to the human nature more than a body and a sentient or animal soul, supposing the intellectual nature or reason to be supplied by the Divine Logos; but this opinion was contradicted by the assertion, that the Word of God took upon himself, not only a true body, but a reasonable human soul. Nestorius and his followers insisted much upon the completeness of the two natures, but shrunk from the admission of so close a union between them, that the acts and attributes of both might be ascribed indifferently to one and the same person. They were willing to admit the combination of the two into one *presentation*, but not into one *individual*, one person in the stricter sense. The council of Ephesus condemned this opinion, by deciding, that the union of the two natures into one real person, was so perfect that the same person, though he might receive his designation from either of the natures, performs all the acts, possesses all the attributes, and is subject to all the conditions of both. He who shed his blood for us is truly God; and he who sits upon the throne of the universe, receiving the homage of angels, is as truly man. In opposing the error of Nestorius, Eutyches and his followers fell into the opposite extreme. They maintained that the two natures, originally distinct, became one simple nature after the union, the human nature being absorbed into the divine. The council of Chalcedon endeavored to meet and condemn both these errors in one formulary. They decreed, that "One and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is to be acknowledged as perfect in his Godhead, and perfect in his humanity, truly God, and truly man; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, only begotten; in two

Digitized by Google

natures, unconfounded, unchanged, undivided, inseparable; the distinction of natures not at all done away by the union, but rather the peculiarity of each nature preserved and combining into one personal subsistence." At a later day an attempt was made to unite contending parties, and reconcile the Eutychians to the church, by the admission, that, although the two natures remain perfectly distinct, yet only one will, or one operation of will, need be recognized as belonging to the two. This, however, seeming as it did, to impair the completeness of the human nature, as well as to contradict the Scriptures, wherein the will of Christ is represented as yielding by its own proper act of submission to the will of the Father, obtained only a limited currency, and was formally rejected by the great body of the church.

Of course, we do not ground our faith on the decisions of councils, or the opinions of majorities. We refer to them only as helps, to ascertain and define the prevailing doctrine. Whether it be true or false, is an entirely different question. The essence of the doctrine turns almost entirely upon the meaning of the words *nature* and *person*. The person, it is every where insisted, is one and indivisible; the natures two, unconfounded and unimpaired. What then, is the meaning of these terms?

The word *nature*, as employed in this connection, includes all the distinguishing peculiarities of a kind. Thus, the nature of man is manhood, comprising all the attributes, susceptibilities, faculties, etc., which distinguish man, as such, from every other class of beings; the nature of God is Godhead, or divinity,—all that distinguishes God from every order of created existences.

We pass then to the consideration of the word *person*, as distinguished from nature. Every person, it is at once admitted, has a nature; and every rational or intelligent nature subsists only as the nature of some person.

Opponents of the doctrine before us, have insisted that here is a distinction without a difference. They assert, that there is no conceivable sense, in which the word *person* can be applied to the unity of two natures, distinguished as we profess to distinguish these, without a plain contradiction. "According to this doctrine," says Dr. Channing, "Jesus Christ, instead of being one mind, one conscious, intelligent principle, whom we can understand, consists of two souls, two minds,—the one divine, the other human; the one weak, the other Almighty; the one ignorant,

Digitized by Google

the other omniscient. Now we maintain, that this is to make Christ two beings. To denominate him one person, one being, and yet to suppose him made up of two minds, infinitely different from each other, is to abuse and confound language, and throw darkness over all our conceptions of intelligent natures. According to the common doctrine, each of these two minds has its own consciousness, its own will, its own perceptions. They have in fact, no common properties. The divine mind feels none of the wants of the human, and the human is infinitely removed from the perfection and happiness of the divine. Can you conceive of two beings in the universe more distinct? We have always thought one person was constituted and distinguished by one consciousness. The doctrine that one and the same person should have two consciousnesses, two wills, two souls infinitely different from each other, this we think an enormous tax on human credulity."

The ground of this objection is fundamental. It is not, that such a union between two such natures is a *mystery*, passing human comprehension. That were a shallow argument. It is, that by the supposed distinction of natures, we do in fact deny every acknowledged meaning of the word *person*.

If this be true, the sooner we abandon the customary phraseology, the better will the cause of truth be subserved. To insist upon a word, while we contradict all its meanings, is mere folly. Indeed, to say as many have done, that "personality cannot be applied to God in the *same sense* as to men," and yet retain the term, is of questionable propriety. It may not be applicable in the same manner, or with the same adjuncts. Personality in man carries along with it many things which are incompatible with the divine nature. But if the abstract notion of personality, in its most generic sense, does not belong to both, why insist upon using the same term? Let us say, if you please, There is a certain union; we know not what. Or if we must have a term to designate it, let us adopt one equally indefinite with the idea: let us say, there is one *something*, or one *somewhat*; and allow, that whoever admits any kind of union whatsoever, whether of mutual influence, coöperation, affection, or agreement of opinion, receives the substance of the doctrine. Person is a word in common use. It conveys a definite notion. If we do not mean to insist that the union between the two natures in

Digitized by Google

Christ is a personal union, according to some received sense of the word, let us not call it so; lest we gain only the advantage of seeming to say something, with the risk that we shall be obliged to unsay it the moment it has been said. Indeed, in that case the irreverent observation of Dr. Priestley, that we might as well say "abracadabra" as *person*, would be too obviously pertinent.

In order that we may meet the objection thus formidably presented, two questions must be considered and answered: first, What is the established theological meaning of the word *person*, as defined by its history, and the usage of language? and secondly, Is the word thus defined compatible with the alleged distinction of natures?

I. We inquire first, What is the true and accepted meaning of the word? Let us go back to its early history, as employed in theological science.

The Greek fathers used two words to express their idea, — *prosopon* and *hypostasis;* both of which were ambiguous. *Prosopon* signified an intelligent or rational individual; considered, however, with special reference to the character, aspect, or peculiarities through which he might be presented to another's cognizance. *Hypostasis* signified an individual of the same class, but with special reference to his actual subsistence in and of himself. On the other hand, *hypostasis* sometimes meant simple essence or substance: and *prosopon* a mere appearance or enacted character, deriving its etymology from the mask worn by actors on the stage. The ambiguity of the two words led to their perversion. *Prosopon* was the watchword of the Sabellians, who maintained that the Godhead was only manifested under three aspects, or enacted three characters; and *hypostasis* was seized upon by the Arians, who insisted on regarding the Son as of a different essence from the Father. To guard against perversion in both instances, the two terms were sometimes joined, so that the two natures in Christ were said, as in the decree at Chalcedon, to be combined in one *hypostatical prosopon;* or "one individually subsisting character," as the expression may perhaps be translated, — the true idea being the coincidence of the two.

Among the Latins, the favorite term was *persona*, corresponding, both in etymology and signification, very nearly to the Greek *prosopon*, but with a leaning towards the peculiar meaning of the other Greek word, *hypostasis*. The latter term, the Latins

Digitized by Google

were accustomed to translate "substance," and were averse to accepting it in this connection, lest it should convey the idea of a single nature in the person of Christ, and three substances as applied to the Trinity. At length, however, parties came to a mutual understanding;* and the Greeks perceiving that their brethren understood by the term persona, all that *they* meant by their two expressions, ceased to contend, and that term became, and continued to be, from that time, the settled form of speech in the Latin language, whence it was transferred, with scarce an alteration in form or meaning, to our own.

Let us see then, what is the meaning of this word as defined by the usage of these two languages? In the Latin, the definition of Böethius, who flourished in the sixth century, is the foundation of most of those which have been subsequently furnished. It is this: "Persona est substantia individua rationalis naturæ." *Substantia*, as here employed, denotes something which has real being in itself, in distinction from an attribute, an accident, or a mode of being. *Individua* was introduced to designate a *single* subject marked by certain incommunicable peculiarities; in distinction from a species, which has its attributes in common. *Rationalis naturæ*, distinguishes the *class* of individual beings, in which alone persons are found; namely, those which have reason, — excluding both inanimate beings and brute animals. The whole expression may be translated thus: "A person is an individual substance having a rational nature." This, substantially, is the definition of the Schoolmen and Reformers. Rees and Chambers both adopt it in their cyclopædias; and so does Willard, the famous old New England divine, in his Body of Divinity. Some have inserted the word "incommunicable" to denote that which cannot be transferred or shared, — as that Peter cannot be Paul, nor Paul Peter, — the Father cannot be the Son, nor the Son the Father. Some have added the word "completa," — complete, and the phrase, "non sustentata in alia natura" — not sustained in another nature, — in order to exclude from the definition whatever has its subsistence, not in itself, but in some higher being; as, for example, the animal nature of man, which subsists only in union with the immortal spirit; and the human nature of Christ, which has its entire subsistence in the person of the eternal Word.

* At a Council of Alexandria, held by Athanasius, A. D. 362.

Digitized by Google

It is not to be supposed, that this, or any other definition which can be framed, is exact and adequate. A simple idea, — and such, as we shall presently see, is that expressed by the word *person*, — is scarcely capable of such a definition. So much as this, however, seems plain; — and if we had space to introduce and compare the various modifications which have been suggested, the conclusion would be only the plainer; — that, by *person*, in the view of these writers, is meant an *individual* of the intelligent or rational class, in distinction from an attribute, a species, a brute animal, or a thing. This, indeed, is somewhat happily expressed in another form by Waterland, who defines a person to be "an intelligent agent, having the distinctive characters of I, thou, he, and not divided into more intelligent agents capable of the same characters." It is true that the learned Dr. Webster confines the word in all his definitions to the human species, leaving no room for its application, in any proper sense, either to God or to angels. But, with all due deference to so great an authority, we can hardly forget the usage of the entire English church, which has performed so important a part in making the English language what it is.

Let us now interrogate our own experience. What do we all mean when we speak of a person? Is it not precisely that which we have already gathered from the definitions of the learned, — a rational individual, a self; one who acts, suffers, and enjoys; who is himself, and can be no other than himself? If you ask what *constitutes* such a being, it may not be easy to answer. We know what constitutes him rational. It is reason. But what makes him an individual, in the sense supposed, — a being inclosed within the walls of an incommunicable self? Is it the will, the affections, the understanding, the memory? Is it the congeries of all these in one organization? We think not. All these may be included under the concrete term *person*, as the adjuncts of personality, and inseparable from it. But they do not constitute it. The notion of personality is a perfectly simple one. It cannot be analyzed, and therefore cannot easily be defined; yet it is perfectly intelligible. What child has not felt constrained to speculate on the mysterious fact that I is I, and can be no other? Who has not laughed over the nursery tale, at the absurdity of the very supposition that I might not be I, but something else? That which is called *I* by the being him-

Digitized by Google

self, *thou*, or *you*, by those who address him, and *he* by those who speak of him, — that is a person. That which constitutes him such is personality. Beyond this we cannot go. Personality is the individuating principle, which gives unity and incommunicability to the complex powers, faculties and susceptibilities of our nature, constituting them one self.

Apply this definition to the case of the Trinity and the Incarnation. The church has always maintained, that the undivided substance of the Godhead subsists in three persons; — that is to say, three, to whom the personal pronouns, I, thou, he, may be applied; and that not figuratively, as a personification, but in strict propriety of speech. So in reference to the Lord Jesus Christ: in asserting two distinct natures in one person, she asserts complete divinity and complete humanity to subsist together, unconfounded and unmixed, in one who may, with strict propriety, speak of himself as one and the same *I*, and be addressed or spoken of as one and the same *thou* or *he*. The human body and soul, with all the properties of both, are one man. So the divine and human natures of Christ, with all their distinct properties, are one Christ.

II. The question now arises, Is this notion of a person compatible with the alleged distinction of two complete natures in Christ? In other words, Is it possible that two such natures should subsist in one such individual?

In all persons, the subject I, or self, is unquestionably an indivisible unit. But this unity is not destroyed by a complexity of powers, faculties, and operations. Every person has such complexity. Peter and Paul are persons, conscious and rational individuals, having each his own incommunicable identity, indivisible except by the destruction of their personality. Yet, in Peter and Paul are distinguished various properties, some peculiar to themselves, some common to themselves and others. Every human person has both a body and a soul,— two natures, a physical and a mental. Furthermore, the oneness is not destroyed by differences occurring in the condition of the same faculties or powers, at different periods of time. Peter in his old age, is one and the same person with Peter in his youth; yet every faculty which he possesses, every part of his nature, his intellect, his memory, his affections, his will, no less than his bodily organization, have undergone a series of changes. The child Peter, and Peter the

Digitized by Google

aged, are not united by the absolute sameness of a single attribute or power; yet we recognize in both, the same person. The Peter of to-day claims indemnity for the pains inflicted on the Peter of yesterday, though he feels none of them, and may perhaps have lost all recollection of the sensations. Peter here, is the same person with Peter in the world of spirits. Yet how different! — the nature of a sinful man, and that of one equal to the angels, belonging at different points of time, to the same self!

But if complexity of faculties and attributes does not, of itself, necessarily destroy oneness of person, who shall determine *what* complexity, and how much, is incompatible with it? And, if a wide difference of nature, such as exists between a saint in glory and a child of earth still dwelling in the flesh, may belong to the same person at different periods of time, without impairing his oneness, who shall determine that a similar difference of nature, or even a greater, may not exist at the same time, and still the unity be unbroken?

For example: Suppose we conceive of a man endowed with two distinct powers or faculties of perception, one acting through the senses in their ordinary channels, and the other without them, as is assumed in the case of mesmerism. Suppose two faculties of memory, are working by "suggestion," "association of ideas," or whatever it may be called, and the other without it; two intellectual faculties, one obtaining knowledge by a train of inferences, and the other looking at truth directly, as we see colors by the eye; two sets of affections, one following the laws of human affections, and the other some different law; for example, that of angelic natures, whatever it may be; two wills, one moved only on the presentation of some outward motive, and the other making or furnishing its own motive, and acting independently of the exterior world. Would such complexity necessarily make two persons? Would even a greater? How can it be proved to be a plain contradiction, — not a mystery, which God alone can solve, — that a complexity with infinite differences should be supposed to coalesce in one and the same self? To come directly to the case before us. Wherein consists the contradictoriness of the supposition, that in one and the same divine self, should be conjoined a divine and a human intellect,— the one knowing all things according to its own laws; and the other, according to the laws of limited natures, obtaining knowledge gradually, and

Digitized by Google

securing it only in an imperfect degree? Or, again; a divine and a human will, the one commanding, and the other yielding to authority; the one moved and the other unmoved; the one finite, and the other infinite? If *person* means what we have just explained, we are at a loss to see wherein the contradiction lies.

But the chief stress seems to be laid upon the supposition of two consciousnesses. Dr. Channing says: "We have always thought that one person was *constituted* and distinguished by one consciousness." Again he says: "According to the common doctrine, each of these two minds has its own consciousness."

We join issue with the objector, on both these propositions. In common with a large class of the best metaphysicians, we have not supposed, that one person is constituted by one consciousness, but rather the reverse. In what consists unity of consciousness? Its operations are manifold, and united among themselves by no assignable link. Memory indeed unites the consciousness of to-day with the consciousness of yesterday; but then memory is imperfect. What link of consciousness unites us to our long forgotten experiences? Yet are they not, as truly as any others, our own past experiences? Does nothing belong to me as a person, but what I am conscious of at the present moment? Perilous consequences result from the broad assertion of the objector, that "one person is constituted by one consciousness." So assumed a class of skeptics in the days of Bishop Butler. "Consciousness," they said, "constitutes personality." Hence they inferred, that the man of to-day could not be the same person with the man of yesterday; "for consciousness," they said, "being successive, cannot be the same in any two moments, nor consequently the personality established by it." Hence they proceeded to overthrow the whole doctrine of human accountability. Not so, however, thought the Bishop himself. He refuted the conclusion, by denying the premises. Consciousness he maintained, is that by which we ascertain our personality, and its identity at different periods of time; but not that in which it consists. To say this, would be to say, "that a person has not existed a single moment, nor done one action but what he can remember; indeed none but what he (at this moment) reflects upon." What is consciousness? A faculty? Then it is plain from what has been said heretofore, that the possession and exercise of two such faculties would be no contradiction to oneness of person. But what

Digitized by Google

is it? "The perception of what passes in a man's own mind," says Locke. "An operation of the understanding of its own kind," says Reid. "The way or method in which we obtain the knowledge of those objects which belong to the mind itself," says Professor Upham. "The light of all our seeing," says Cousin. According to all these definitions of consciousness, in what consists its oneness or plurality? Where is its individuating principle? According to our conceptions, oneness of consciousness is to be found only in oneness of person. It is the consciousness of one and the same self, and so affirms itself to be in all its operations. Otherwise we might, with perfect propriety, speak not only of two consciousnesses, as distinguishing the Saviour's divine and human natures, but of as many consciousnesses in every human being, as there are in the mind objects or experiences of which to be conscious.

But however that may be, we deny in the second place, that "according to the common doctrine," (if by common doctrine be meant the doctrine of the church generally,) the two natures in Christ have each its own consciousness. The doctrine of two consciousnesses has not been maintained, so far as we know, in any of the creeds, Catholic or Protestant. The ancient councils, which distinguish so sharply between nature and nature, say nothing about it. If any have maintained it, it must have been only as a mode of harmonizing their own metaphysical notions of consciousness, (and of these, as we have seen, there is a great variety,) with the statements of Scripture respecting Christ's acts and experiences. We admit the fact, for example; that Christ is said to know some things, while, in another sense, he did not know them; and to suffer some things, while, in another sense, he did not suffer them; having perfect knowledge and blessedness in his divine nature, and partial and progressive knowledge, and liability to extreme suffering, in his human nature. If any assert that these facts imply two consciousnesses, it is an inference drawn from their particular views of what consciousness is. It may be true under one definition, and false under another. The received doctrine makes itself responsible for no man's metaphysical opinions. It neither affirms nor denies. The position which it assumes is simply this, that there are two distinct and perfect *natures*. All that distinguishes man from God, and all that distinguishes God from man, is in the one person of Christ unconfounded and unchanged. Whether difference of consciousness

Digitized by Google

is implied in this, the doctrine does not affirm. That distinct personality is not implied, it explicitly maintains.

We conclude then, that the charge of contradiction and absurdity, in the received doctrine of the incarnation, is a charge *not proved*. Mystery, we readily allow, belongs to every feature of God's infinite being; and not the least, to the subject of two distinct natures in one Divine Person.

In defining the word person, as may be seen, we have made no distinction between its meaning as applied to the Trinity and to the case of the incarnate Saviour. The reason is obvious. According to the doctrine before us, the person of the latter, is no other than the second Person of the Trinity himself. "Christ the Son of God *became* man," says the Westminster catechism, not by taking a human person and joining him to himself, so making of two persons one compound person, but, "by taking to *himself*," that is to his own person, a proper manhood,— a human nature, with all the parts and attributes thereof,— "a true body and a reasonable soul." Christ's human nature is a perfect manhood, but not a perfect man, apart from its connection with the Divine Word. It never had a separate subsistence; never existed but in the Divine Person by whom it was assumed. This one Person remains the same before and after incarnation. He was, and still is, "God over all blessed forever." But he *became* man, not joined himself to a man; "and so was, and continues to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person forever."

It only remains that we inquire, whether oneness of person, as we have now explained it, is asserted in the Scriptures concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. We shall assume here, as a point established by abundant evidence, his perfect divinity, and perfect manhood; and shall pass to consider whether that oneness of person, which we have shewn to be intended by our formularies, and to be consistent with the supposition of two such perfect natures, is ascribed to him by himself and his apostles. It is admitted that the terms, "person," and "personality," are not used in connection with this subject by the sacred writers. It is the *thing* only which we are to look for in their representations.

We have already defined the notion of one person to be that of one rational individual, one self, one I, thou, he, in the proper use of those terms; to whom, as to a common subject, the actions, passions, and attributes of a rational being are to be

Digitized by Google

referred. Now, it requires but a single glance at the sacred history to perceive, that in all the diversity, indeed apparent opposition of attributes, which are ascribed to Christ, he is every where spoken of as one and the same individual. With his human lips, he declares to his associates, "Before Abraham was I am," — I, who speak to you, I, whom you see with your bodily eyes, I AM without beginning of existence. "I came down from heaven." "I am one with my Father." "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." An apostle speaking of him as God, declares that he purchased the church with his own blood. But what then; has God blood to shed? Yes, God incarnate has; for it was to this end, among others, that he took upon himself a true body. The very same individual, who, in respect to his Deity, is, and ever must be perfectly blessed, could, and did suffer excruciating agonies, and shed his blood for man, in virtue of the attributes of his humanity. Such certainly is the obvious representation. He who was in the beginning with God, and was God, whom all the angels of God worshipped, who knew all things, and could do all things, that same He, was born of a virgin, made under the law, grew in knowledge from the ignorance of childhood, to the comparatively perfect intelligence of a full grown man, was despised of men, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and to atone for our sins was crucified, and died. The sacred writers make no distinction between the God and the man. It is ever one and the same being, to whom they ascribe all the attributes of both. They pass from one nature to another without the least intimation that there is more than one personal subject to be addressed, or spoken of. In the Trinity, we find the Father addressing the Son, and the Son the Father, and both of them speaking of the Spirit. But in the person of Christ there is but one I, one thou, one he, according as he speaks of himself, or is addressed, or spoken of. We never find the two natures acting towards each other in a personal manner, conversing together, speaking of each other, sending or being sent by each other, or receiving and conferring favors between themselves. Every where, both in his own representations and those of his apostles, he is one and the same self.

It is, then, in no unusual, improper, or unintelligible sense, that we speak of the incarnate Saviour as one person. When we apply that term to express what the Scriptures teach concerning him, we apply it just as grammar applies it, just as the usage of the

Digitized by Google

best writers applies it, just as the language of common life applies it. There is no evading this conclusion but by resorting to the supposition of figurative language, and making the words used to express personality, nothing more than rhetorical personification. This, none who receive the gospel scheme of redemption, can ever do; for the doctrine of a strict and proper unity of person lies at the basis of that scheme; and to deny or materially qualify it, is to vitiate every other doctrine in the system.

We know well, that there is mystery, deep mystery, involved in this subject; and well may we exclaim as we contemplate it; "O, the depth of the riches!" How the union could be formed, God only knows. Precisely what consequences are involved in it, we can judge but partially. Enough for us, that we are apprised of the fact, and are permitted to lay it as the corner stone of our faith. There let it lie, unbroken and unmoved.

Too much, has this precious doctrine fallen into neglect in modern times. And the sad effects are manifest, in the advantage which has been gained in argument by the advocates of error; and the loose and inadequate views, not to say gross departures from right doctrine, which have vitiated the whole circle of theology in some who would be thought sound in the faith. Most gladly would we restore the doctrine to its original completeness, and the position which it ought ever to maintain, as the centre and the fountain of light to the whole Christian scheme.

Nothing short of a true personal union between two complete natures gives us the Saviour whom we need. To explain the name Christ, as only a general term, covering two distinct persons joined in one manifestation, is to give us, in effect, two Saviours, neither of whom is adequate to our necessities. Then, the sacrifice of the cross might well be resolved into a mere scenic representation, for its inadequateness to take away sin, on the the ground of a proper substitution, would be too manifest. We should have only a human sacrifice, administered by a divine Deliverer. A man died for us: but not the Lord of Life.

Tell me not, says the humble Christian, that the being who was sacrificed for me, was most excellent and exalted,— that he held intimate communion with God, or was more closely united to God, in some mysterious way, than ever man or angel beside. I want a Saviour, who himself *is* God; not apparently, not to my limited faculties, but truly and properly. Delightful is the

Digitized by Google

thought, that, in the Redeemer of our race, I can find a brother man, a true member of the same human family with myself. But is this all? O no! I seek for a more lofty brotherhood. I seek to be, and, if this doctrine be true, and I am a true disciple, I *am* a brother of the Lord of glory, the second Person of the equal and undivided Trinity. He died for me. His own self bore my sins.

When we speak of divinity and humanity, we speak of the two natures. And here, as we have said before, each retains, unchanged, and untransferable, its own properties. To say that the Deity suffered and died, or that humanity is a proper object of adoration, would be false. Deity is incapable of suffering; manhood never can be an object of worship. But to say that the Lord of glory suffered for our sakes, or that Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son of God, is but to ascribe the attributes of either nature to the one unchanged and undivided Person, from whichsoever nature the name applied to him may be derived. And this is right. God died upon the cross. Man holds the sceptre of the universe, and will judge the world. So have we a Saviour, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and yet is able, of his own proper divinity, to save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him.

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

EXPLORATION OF THE DEAD SEA. — One of the most singular undertakings of these singular times of ours is the exploration of that living stream, the Jordan, and of the fatal sea in which it dies, which has been recently made by Lieutenant Lynch, under the auspices of our government. Though very much out of the common course of our national politics, it is by no means one of the worst undertakings of the navy department. In executing his commission, Lieutenant Lynch manifested astonishing intelligence, courage, hardihood, and perseverance. In describing it, he lays himself open to the criticisms of all literary Bedouins, "whose hand is against every man" that dares to lift a pen. His prolixity and sentimentalism would, indeed, be lawful plunder for greedy reviewers; but his book disarms criticism, as being a sacred charity. It is understood that he has generously bestowed all the avails of his publication upon the orphan children of Lieutenant Dale, whose life fell a sacrifice to his toils in

Digitized by Google

coöperating with Lieutenant Lynch, and who was soon followed to "the place of departed spirits" by his broken-hearted wife.

This volume settles some very important points, which have long been in dispute. It is ascertained that the sacred river, of which so much is said in the ancient history and the modern poetry of our religion, descends above a thousand feet, and winds over two hundred miles, in traversing the twenty leagues which separate the Dead Sea from the lake of Tiberias. It is ascertained also, that the surface of the Dead Sea is twelve hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean; and that its greatest depth is equal to twelve hundred more. The whole shape, and all the remarkable peculiarities, of the Dead Sea are now known by scientific survey. Many most interesting particulars in regard to it are either placed beyond a doubt, or are brought to light for the first time; and all the geological features of the region go to confirm the accuracy of the Mosaic narrative of the destruction of the guilty cities of the plain.

VISIT TO MONASTERIES IN THE LEVANT. — The Honorable Robert Curzon, a wealthy commoner of England, and what is much more, a man of wit, and taste, and learning, has availed himself of some peculiar facilities for visiting these venerable retreats, many of which have been in existence above a thousand years. Most of them are almost inaccessible to the common traveller, and great is our obligation to Mr. Curzon for his "exploring expeditions," conducted with much expense and personal peril, among the convents of Egypt, Syria, Albania, and Mount Athos. Adventures, most strange, romantic, or amusing, befel him at every turn; and nothing could have carried him through, but his bibliomania, which is of the most rabid kind. His main object was the collection of ancient manuscripts of the Scriptures and the classics; and his zeal was not surpassed by that of the legendary Knights of the Round Table in their search for the Sangreal. We cordially recommend the purchase of this book to every one who desires to possess almost the only information to be had on a very interesting subject, presented in a form vastly readable and entertaining, as well as reliable. Monachism is full of queer things. Only think of that full grown monk of Xeropotamo, who "had never seen a woman, nor had he any idea what sort of things women were, or what they looked like;" and who, in the simplicity of his soul, asked of Mr. Curzon whether they resembled the stiff-starched pictures of the Panagia, the Holy Virgin, which hang in every church!

NINEVEH AND ITS REMAINS. — This work, in two large and well illustrated volumes, is worthy of a place in any collection of books, whether large or small. In this age of wonders, it is not the least of marvels that monuments of the oldest monarchy on earth, with sculptures and inscriptions probably coeval with Moses and Abraham, should be found in a high state of preservation, and once more, after a burial of thousands of years, be laid open to the eye of modern science. Thus the human race is recovering, one by one, the lost chapters of its earlier history. Divine Providence, the careful keeper

Digitized by Google

of these forgotten records, is bringing them in due order from their profound obscurity. The decyphering of the hieroglyphics of Egypt, in which much has been done, and far more remains to be effected, prepared the way for understanding many of those Ninevite remains which, by the admirable skill and enterprize of Mr. Layard, have been exhumed from those prodigious mounds which, for silent and solitary ages have reposed on the banks of the Tigris. There is something awe-inspiring, in thus intruding into the long buried secrets of an elder world. These sculptured records, however, reluctantly render up their secrets; for the language which is graven in the wedge-shaped letters is too imperfectly understood as yet, to afford a revelation of what is written. But this impediment will give way before the enthusiastic studies of the scholars who are devoting their strength to its removal. That language, so long dead, will be revived so far as to tell all that these numberless inscriptions know of those who carved them. Meanwhile the work of excavation goes steadily on, and is daily regaining new treasures from those oblivious ruins. Expectation will be kept constantly awake, till, at no distant day, the original histories of our race will be reconstructed from its own monumental archives; and the glorious providence of God will be as distinctly read in the affairs of all nations, as it is now in those of Israel. It is gratifying to be able to say, what indeed we confidently anticipated, that so far as the historical discoveries which Mr. Layard describes, have any bearing upon the allusions in the Old Testament to Assyrian history, they add full confirmation to the Scriptures.

ECCLESIOLOGY. — This is an era of new sciences and new names; and the science which treats of meeting-house fashions and fixings has attained to the dignity of a high place among the "ologies." The votaries of this sublime branch of knowledge have, in New York, an Ecclesiological Society, formed for its cultivation, — and have also an organ, "The New York Ecclesiologist," for garnering its fruits. With great earnestness and unction, and prodigious learning and simplicity, they discuss such edifying and important themes as the arrangement of chancels, the orientation of churches, the manufacture of altar-linen, and all that relates to the man-millinery of "holy mother." Every rag of her scarlet vestments is discussed and arranged by these enlightened gentry with sedulous care. Learned in all the wisdom of the dark ages, they are tenderly scrupulous as to every nicety in the garniture of an altar, and the vesture of a priest. It is a pity that so much labor and solicitude should be lost. It is certain, from the "Visit to the Monasteries in the Levant," elsewhere noticed in these pages, that "the earliest Christian churches were *not* cruciform, and seldom had transepts, nor were they built with any reference to the points of the compass." The author of this book, himself a zealous antiquary and an Episcopalian, roundly asserts, that "the numerous well-meaning authors, who have written on the restoration of our older churches, appear to him to be completely in the dark. Gothic is NOT Christian architecture, — it is Roman Catholic architecture: the vestures of English ecclesiastics are *not* restorations of early simplicity, — they are modern inventions taken from German

Digitized by Google

collegiate dresses which have nothing to do with religion." Among the innumerable oriental churches inspected by him, were some whose construction dates from the days of Justinian, and other previous emperors. He says: "It is this systematic respect for every thing which is old and venerable, which renders the interior of the ancient Eastern churches so peculiarly interesting. They are the unchanged monuments of primæval days. The Christians who suffered under the persecution of Dioclesian may have knelt before the very altar which we now see, and which was then exactly the same as we now behold it, without any additions or subtractions either in its form or use. To us Protestants, one of the most interesting circumstances connected with these Eastern churches is, that the altar is not called the *altar*, but the *holy table*, as with us; and that the Communion is given before it in both kinds." And so, with thanks to the Hon. Robert Curzon for his contributions to the rising science of "ecclesiology," we drop the important theme!

THE APOSTLES' CREED. — Dr. Nevin, who appears to be chief cyclops, and forger of thunderbolts for what is called the "Mercersburg Theology," has turned his one eye, with vulcanian glare, towards us; and launched his lightnings at our heads, for a supposed want of respect for that venerable symbol, the so-called Apostles' Creed. In rebuking the flippancy of a sciolist, who had spoken as if it were an undoubted fact that this ancient form was drawn up by the Apostles, we had said that it "was no more an apostolical invention than was Christmas pie." In the sense in which we used the words, Dr. Nevin, like any man of ordinary learning, fully accords with us. And we hold, as firmly as he does, that the creed is truly apostolical in regard to "the divine substance of its contents," and as "representing from the beginning, the one unvarying faith of the universal Christian world." There are other creeds which, in the same sense, are no less apostolical.

But Dr. Nevin takes occasion from this expression to charge us, and the Puritans generally, with a profane and superficial contempt for that "churchly," or traditional piety, which springs from other sources than the Bible. The reviving of this type of religion seems to be the distinct object of the "Mercersburg Theology," which is either Anglican piety Germanized, or German piety Anglicized. Which it is, may be very hard to decide; — too hard to pay the cost of obtaining a decision. On contrasting the practical workings of Puritanism in New England and elsewhere, with the results which have followed from the prevailing religious philosophy in Germany and in the churches of German origin in this country, we are very well content with our side of the bargain. In the German character we see much to admire, and something to imitate; but what has it done for the extensive and permanent revival of sound doctrine, pure morality, active beneficence, and civil and religious freedom, in comparison with what has been done by Puritanism, with far inferior numbers and resources?

Our brethren of the New Englander seem to think, that "it is only necessary to organize a strong party against the Mercersburg views,

Digitized by Google

and to denounce them as radically unsound and quite inconsistent with a profession of orthodoxy; and they will probably make a great impression." But with all deference, we must think that the mistiness of those views, and the cloudiness in which they are phrased, are so great, that no degree of opposition, even to mobbing and stoning their spectral supporters, will give them body enough to make any very *palpable* impression on the genuine American mind.

FRENCH POLITICS. — The French must be dear lovers of republicanism, as it is plain that they are so eager to monopolize the article, as not to allow it to be enjoyed by the poor nations around them, who, excited by the example of France, have been grasping after a share of the precious commodity. While some of these aspiring young republics are suppressed by Austria and Russia, others are crushed by France herself. The recent transactions at Rome would seem to have sunk the glory of the French nation to depths of infamy, from which it can never be recovered. Many of the bitterest foes of popular rights in Great Britain, at the close of the last century, were made such by the excesses of the modern Gauls in their first revolution. At first, Coleridge and Southey, and many other young literary enthusiasts were all on fire, with dreams of Pantisocracy, and other socialist notions. But the "reign of terror" cured them of their liberalism, and drove them back to the opposite extreme.

Coleridge, who never did any thing by halves, except his books and poems, cherished through the rest of his days a rabid detestation of every thing Gallican. He once astonished a literary audience in London, by lifting up his hands, in the midst of his lecture, and devoutly returning thanks to his Maker, for having never been left to learn "one syllable of that detestable jargon, the French tongue!" He tells of his admiring the statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo, at Rome, in the company of a Prussian. Their encomiums of this splendid work of art were interrupted by the clash of sabre-sheaths on the marble floor, announcing the approach of a brace of French cavalry officers; belonging to the garrison then in possession of Rome. The Prussian forewarned Coleridge, that as soon as these wretches should notice the pencils of rays on the forehead of the Hebrew prophet, they would proclaim him a "cornuto;"— which accordingly came to pass. As the profane and heartless jesters retired, the Prussian exclaimed, with suppressed rage: "A Frenchman is an animal, which by no possibility can be raised to the slightest sense of honor or religion!" And Coleridge added his heartiest Amen. At another time, he broke out in the assertion: "Your Frenchmen, Sir, are like grains of gunpowder; take them singly, and they are smutty and contemptible, — but mass them together, and they are terrible indeed!"

But while that mercurial people have given too much occasion for such reproaches, it would be going altogether too far to despair of a nation which gave birth to JOHN CALVIN. And many a noble, and many a hallowed, name beside may be arrayed, to retrieve her name from utter reprobation. And even in regard to these latest depravities at Rome, it ought to be known that there are thousands and thou-

Digitized by Google

sands of worthy Frenchmen who feel with the keenest anguish the crimes and disgraces of their country.

CONGREGATIONAL FRIENDS.— While we rejoice in the growing popularity of Congregationalism, we must be patient under the annoyance of seeing its designation stolen, to label off any new compound of folly and fanaticism which craves the benefit of a good name. The new sect is a fungus sprung from that compost of Quakerism, Unitarianism, and Infidelity, called Hicksite Friends. It consists of Come-outers from the Come-outers; and it proposes to make a radical reform in radicalism itself. It has published an "Address to Reformers," duly signed by its scribes, masculine and feminine. From this address, we quote the following passage, containing the only Scripture cited as authority for its sentiments: "The friends of Humanity, of every class, should sedulously cultivate the spirit of harmony and mutual coöperation so beautifully described by one of the prophets of Israel: 'They helped every one his neighbor; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer, him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering; AND HE FASTENED IT WITH NAILS THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE MOVED.' Isaiah xli. 6, 7."

This is a very unfortunate quotation, for the purpose of those who make it. For when "the prophet of Israel" was writing these words, he was "beautifully describing" the "spirit of harmony and mutual coöperation" of a gang of idolatrous craftsmen making and setting up a false god. In this, and in the preceding chapters, the prophet exposes, in strains of eloquent scorn and irony, the desperate stupidity of idol-worship, in contrast with the service of the true God. The "Congregational Friends," would do better to stick to "inward light." By thus dabbling with Scripture, they have unwittingly confessed that they have only been fabricating and fastening up a new idol! All their "nails" will not prevent it from falling, like Dagon before the ark of the Lord. Quakers are apt to be unlucky in proof-texts. One of them, mentioned by D'Israeli, to prove the text,— "Man shall not live by bread alone,"— persisted in refusing his meals. Thus the literal text proved for him a dead letter, and this practical commentator died of a metaphor. Thus, too, one queer branch of this singular sect is said to justify their dancing in religious worship, by the prophetic injunction: "Turn ye, turn ye!" But any text will serve for those whose heads are already turned.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF ADAM AND DAVID.— This is not a book of which it may be said, "that it has no faults, nor any thing else." Besides other strong objections, as bordering very closely, though called an "allegory," on the regions of romance, it lies open to severe criticism on account of its strange and decidedly infernal machinery. Lucifer, alarmed at the progress of modern missions, is supposed to have undertaken a journey to distant worlds on affairs of state. In one of these, he finds Adam preaching to the sinless inhabitants the story of man's apostacy and redemption. In another, he finds David and Jonathan, united in immortal friendship; and engaged like Adam

Digitized by Google

in showing forth the wondrous ways of God. Lucifer, at length, returns; and, in a conclave of fallen angels,— unaware of the presence of Mr. Gallaher, who "happens in,"— he tells his fellow-demons what he has heard and seen, with the design of preparing them for new conflicts with the church. To find such an amount of sacred truth and fervid piety reported only through the lips of Miltonic demons, will grate rather harshly against the grain, with the devout reader, who must feel some reluctance at coming under so much obligation to those "gentlemen in black." And it may be doubted whether even "the children of the devil" will be much conciliated by a book, whose plan represents their father as completely befooled by his own craftiness, and turned into a drudging tool for thwarting his own devices. We are reminded of the Popish bishop in France, who was invited by some infidel rail-road directors, from politic motives, to baptize their locomotives; but finding one of the engines blazoned with the name of "Lucifer," the bishop refused to proceed with the ceremony. Perhaps he was thinking of the old adage, that "the devil hates holy water." Why the prince of darkness should feel any such animosity, is not easy to see; for holy water is one of his neatest inventions for deluding men with the belief, that sins have been washed away, though cleaving to the soul as close as ever.

But apart from such critical objections to the book, which is now stereotyped in a new and elegant edition, we must speak with the highest admiration of its deep and clear views of religious truth, its brilliant eloquence, its life-like vivacity of description, and its thorough originality of matter and manner. It is rare indeed, that we fall in with a volume so excessively readable. "Children will cry for it;" and the aged, in perusing its imaginative and inspiriting pages, will "renew their youth as the eagles." All persons are hereby warned not to take it up till they have leisure to go through with it at one sitting; for otherwise, if they once begin, they will be prodigiously tempted to yield to its attractions, and let business go.

ORDINATIONS.

Aug. 8. Mr. Allen Clarke, Windham, Con., as an Evangelist to Illinois.
" 9. Mr. Wheelock Craig, New Castle, Me.

INSTALLATIONS.

July 11. Rev. S. S. Tappan, Conway, N. H.
" " Rev. W. J. Newman, First Church, York, Me.
" 18. Rev. Wales Lewis, East Parish, Haverhill, Mass.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

June 22. Rev. Oliver Cobb, D. D., Rochester, Mass., æ. 80.
July 13. Rev. J. K. Lord, Cincinnati, O., æ. 80.
" 16. Rev. Daniel Dorr, D. D., Thompson, Conn., æ. 77.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill*, *Boston*.

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] OCTOBER, 1849. [No. 10.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

CONTENTS.

Page

REVIEW:

1. Noel's Essay on Church and State,
2. Monod's Letter to the Consistory of Paris,
3. Monod's Farewell Sermon, ... 445

GOD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENTS, ... 459

THE TRUE FOUNDATION, ... 466

THE CHURCHES WARNED, ... 471

SCIENTIFIC MEETING AT CAMBRIDGE, ... 479

IMPUTATION, ... 483

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS AND THINGS:

The Works of Dr. Woods, Vol. I., ... 488

Shakspeare, ... 488

Hume's History of England, ... 489

The Buckminsters, ... 490

Second Church in Boston, ... 491

Meeting of the American Board, ... 492

Ecclesiastical Lists, ... 492

NOTICE.

The PUBLISHERS of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, being so situated that they cannot give their personal attention to the circulation, and other pecuniary interests of the work, are desirous to dispose of their property in it to some competent and suitable person. Any such person, inclined to undertake its publication, is requested to make application to JOHN V. BEANE & CO.,

21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Any person remitting to this office six dollars, shall receive four copies of the Christian Observatory for 1849.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., PUBLISHERS,

No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863, S. C. 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. OCTOBER, 1849. No. 10.

REVIEW.

1. ESSAY ON THE UNION OF CHURCH AND STATE, by Baptist Wriothesley Noel, M. A. Ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ; Eph. iv. 15. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1849.
2. LETTER TO THE CONSISTORY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF PARIS, by Frederic Monod, dated Paris, January 5, 1849.
3. SKETCH OF M. MONOD'S FAREWELL SERMON, at the Church of the Oratoire, delivered April 22, 1849.

THE books, the movements, and the men, here referred to, are prominent signs of the times. Just such, indeed, have appeared once and again since the first fatal consent of the church to abandon her theocratic form, and submit to the dominion of an earthly king. But they have never appeared before, under circumstances which warranted the expectation of such consequences. It must be remembered that the permanent displacing of abused power is a feature of this age. All orders of men now readily believe, that human nature is too selfish to be safely entrusted with irresponsible power; that exalting men to office, title, emolument, and authority, does not diminish the strength of the selfish tendency, but rather aggravates it. In the days of the Stuarts there was such an awful reverence for birth and rank, that men came most reluctantly and partially to the conviction, that titled men could be guilty of unqualified wickedness and tyranny. In that day too, the press and the mind were under the control of men in power, who could quickly divert the public gaze from any casual exposure of their wickedness.

But we are fallen on other times. Every man now finds in himself a love of power, and a love of wealth, which he can readily believe to exist also in other men. The conviction has seized

Digitized by Google

the common mind, that society is groaning under the load of venerable absurdities and wrongs. There is no doubt that this feeling is now exaggerated and misdirected; and that it often covers in them that exercise it, as much wickedness as it exposes in them that it attacks. Yet besides and above this, there is a sound and enlightened conviction, that abuses, enormous and most injurious, are in existence; and, that they can and must be removed. We have come to a period too, in which nations are less separated, so that when an abuse is exposed and removed in one country, its life is weakened among every other people. And not only is this peculiar feature of our age to be regarded, but also the fact that the English people are remarkably endowed with good sense. They may hesitate to cut off a tumor from the body politic, while they are not yet sure that no artery will be sévered in the process. They may pause some time before cutting the Siamese twins asunder; and that too, long after coming to the conclusion that it is a very uncomfortable and unprofitable life for both to be united as they are. Yet, when the eye of that people is once fairly turned to the contemplation of an enormous abuse, they are in a fair way to abolish it. And what if religion should become free in England! The imagination dares not trace the further movements of Providence that may reasonably be expected to follow. The history of the Free Church of Scotland is truly brilliant; and yet what is that? Not the complete abolishing of the unholy alliance of Church and State. It is, at first, only the removing of the accursed weight of the union from some four hundred ministers. And yet the glorious Reformation itself was scarcely more important to Scotland than this deliverance has been; although the deliverance is so partial, and leaves the evil system still to perpetuate hypocrisy and formality, to ensnare the good men who remain in the establishment, and to embarrass good men out of it.

It is reasonable to suppose, that, if the whole system could be abolished in Great Britain, Ireland would at once present, and actually become, an open field to English missionary labor; Scotland would double its Christian vigor and efficiency; and the English churches, of all evangelical creeds, would put on a new aspect of life and spiritual health. For, without going into the subject under the direction of some such faithful and competent guide as Mr. Noel, no one can conceive in what numberless ways,

Digitized by Google

and to what a fearful extent, the union of Church and State is arresting the progress of true religion in that country; and, through that country, in the world.

To us, the movement of Mr. Noel is, therefore, a sign of the times, most significant and welcome. Contempt, indifference, neglect, the cry of "Our church, our venerable liturgy!" will not avail against him. Dissenters, as they are arrogantly denominated, have now placed in their hands a weapon whose blow will ring through the old cathedrals; and echo in the manses, and prebends' stalls, and bishops' palaces, like a giant battle-axe on gates of steel. Yes; the last great battle in old England, our noble, loved, venerated father-land, is now to be fought. As to monarchy, colonial subjection, and hereditary nobility, if they are ever to cease, we see no reason to doubt that, when their time has come, they will be yielded to a few such struggles in Parliament as banished the corn-laws. But Church and State; — that is the great, the embarrassing question for England. And now the war is really begun; the champion is in the field. It is no "Dissenter," but a churchman; no foreigner, but an Englishman; no plebeian, but a man whose blood is supposed by those whom he opposes, to be better than that of his neighbors. Mr. Noel, indeed, combines extraordinary qualifications for this work. He is a man of unquestionable integrity and piety, of great soberness of mind, and soundness of judgment. Occupying a very peculiar position, as one of the Queen's chaplains, and rector of a proprietary chapel, he has been able, from the beginning, to pursue a very independent course, for a metropolitan clergyman. Nor can we doubt that the Bishop of London has breathed more freely since Mr. Noel's resignation of his charge. But if he has thus yielded his power in one form, by withdrawing from the establishment, he has most efficiently employed it in another, by publishing the results of a long, earnest, conscientious, and prayerful study of the connection of the Church with the State. He has uttered no unmanly, no unchristian words. Whoever knows the man, will give him full credit for language like this, in his Preface: — "Of many of them," (ministers of the establishment,) "I am convinced that they surpass me in devotedness to Christ. While I condemn a State-prelacy, I honor each pious prelate; while I mourn the relations of godly pastors to the State, I no less rejoice in their godliness."

Digitized by Google

Thanks to our fathers, we have no immediate interest in this discussion. But our interest in the progress of true religion, pure worship, the salvation of men, and the glory of our King, brings us into a living contact with this movement. We observe the glorious freedom of the primitive Church, as she stood in her simplicity, first apart from the State; then, opposed and persecuted by the civil power. We see the sad change for her as she yielded up her right of self-government, and put on the golden chains of the Emperor. We see the German Church, at the Reformation, unable to throw off the civil with the ecclesiastical yoke; while Geneva and Scotland proclaimed the headship of Christ, the rights of the church, and the absolute freedom of the human conscience from all human control. But neither the Scotch, the Genevese, nor the Puritan churches knew how to preserve their independence. And it was a singular spectacle, to see Massachusetts and Connecticut, till lately, enforcing the support of the clergy by civil enactments. But the whole United States and their unorganized territory, are now free. The American church is free; the American conscience is free. No civil legislature makes creeds for the mind, nor prescribes the times and forms of worship. And Europe is slowly approaching the same condition. We cannot, indeed, place much reliance on the permanence of those constitutions which have recently been given by provisional governments and popular assemblies in Europe. But they, with similar movements in Mexico and South America, reveal the general direction of the human mind at this time. A large majority of the Scotch people have gone as far as they can at present, in maintaining the sole supremacy of Christ in his church. Yet they are not able entirely to free themselves and their country of the claims of a national hierarchy. The good work has advanced in Switzerland. But we look with chief interest to these limited, yet incipient, movements in England and France, to the labors of Messrs. Noel and Monod.

The argument of Mr. Noel's Essay is introduced, by asserting the sole authority of the Word of God in determining the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the union between the Church and the State. The work itself is laid out in three parts. The first contains the "principles of the union;" which are discussed in two chapters; the one testing the abstract principle, the other, the system as it exists in England. The first part condemns the

Digitized by Google

union by reasons drawn from the Constitution of the State, the parental relation, history, the Mosaic law, prophecy, and the New Testament. The second chapter examines the Anglican system by the Word of God, in four sections; maintenance of pastors by the State; supremacy of the State; patronage; and coercion.

The second part considers the effects of the union, in its influence upon persons; that is, upon bishops, pastors, curates, members, and dissenters; and in its influence upon things; such as the number of ministers, their distribution, maintenance, doctrine and discipline; the evangelization of the country, the union of Christians, the reformation of the churches, progress of religion in the country, upon the government, and upon other national establishments throughout the world.

The third part is in two sections, considering the means of revival in the churches, and of extending religion throughout the country.

It will appear very manifest from this index, that Mr. Noel has taken in hand the whole of the Church and State system. His appeals are to Scripture and facts. The issue is now fairly joined. It is not the Parthian blow of an insincere, weak, disappointed refugee from the church; but the utterance of convictions, the reality of which, at least, none will question. And irrespective of the author, the intrinsic force of the arguments will be felt. That he may share the fate of other iconoclasts, is not improbable. Tearing down old buildings, and emptying old garrets, is a work that naturally causes dust and cobwebs to fly about in clouds, to the no small annoyance of the reformer himself. This man has undertaken to tell John Bull, that he has made a great blunder, and has been doing wrong for a thousand years, in the very thing where he thought himself just the nearest right. Think of Oxford in its sacred retreat, its hairs all hoary with age, its nose all bestrid with scholastic spectacles; think of Cambridge, and York, and Canterbury reading this book! We confess to an almost irreverent merriment, as we see His Grace of Canterbury take up a book of serious tone, which deliberately tells his Grace, that he would serve Christ much better, if he would just give back to the good people of England, seventy thousand dollars a year of that which they now pay him; and try to comfort his poor soul with such good things as the other five thousand might procure!

Digitized by Google

Think of the ambitious young Wilberforce listening to Mr. Noel, who is trying to convince him that he might pray more, study to better advantage, and more uninterruptedly edify the flock of God, if he would lay down his political honors, and attend to the spiritual wants of such of England's perishing millions as lie within the diocese of Oxford!

The question really discussed by Mr. Noel, is this; Is it the will of Christ, that the Christian congregations of England should receive the salaries of their pastors from the State, and be consequently placed under its superintendence?

He opens the discussion by a consideration of the arguments used on the other side; and endeavors to shew, in opposition to them, that it is unreasonable, unnatural, and unwise, to answer this question in the affirmative.

. What is the nature of this alliance? One branch of the church shall receive the protection and support of the State, in return for the employment of the church, the ministry, the Bible, and the consciences of men, for political ends. It means that, or it means nothing. The amiable and eloquent Chalmers deluded himself and others, by the sophism, that as all men ought to be religious in all their relations, therefore they are bound to support the church. If his argument terminated there, it had been well. But the next step is an utter fallacy; for he proceeds to argue, that therefore, the church must submit to be supported by the State. He seemed not to have perceived, until painful experience brought home to him the conviction, that the duty of statesmen to promote religion, is a very different thing from the obligation of the church to submit to the domination of secular authority. He judged charitably of other men, and attributed to them his own noble spirit. But he misunderstood human nature, when he indulged the expectation that secular men would give money to the church, and then leave the church free. If secular men feared Jesus as King; if they had a true apprehension of the nature of his religion, they might possibly deem it wise to secure its ministrations to the whole people; interfering no farther with its functionaries, than to prevent an abuse of power. But that spectacle has not yet been seen, excepting on a very small scale, as formerly in New England, and even there working unfavorably. As human nature is, it is not probable that the State will ever assume the support of the church, except on

Digitized by Google

the condition of choosing the faith of the people, prescribing their modes of worship, controlling the choice of their ministers, and legislating for them, even in their most spiritual interests.

But what is the State? A body of men chosen to office without reference to their religious character. Here then is a principle adopted and abetted, by which ungodly men may become the rulers of Christ's house. This is treason to the head of the church. These men do not profess to be amenable to Christ. They are not a constitutional executive, acting within the prescribed limits of a charter; but an irresponsible oligarchy, usurping that dominion over the conscience, which is the jewel of Christ's crown. Most cordially do we venerate, with all its errors and imperfections, that burning zeal of the old Scottish covenanters, which amid martyr-fires, and the dragoons of Claverhouse, stood unblenching for King Jesus and his prerogatives, against all Erastian usurpation. We wonder that sensible men have ever believed the civil power to possess that spiritual discrimination which might enable it to prescribe doctrine for the church, or to select its officers, or to discipline its members; or that it had any promise of the aid from Christ, which is indispensable to the rulers of his church. It may indeed be said, that the State selects competent men to attend to such matters. But this is coming to the impracticable ground again of making the State a mere treasurer. And what, we ask, does Satan want, but the *appointing power* in Christ's kingdom? You may use as many fine words and pious phrases as you please, about selecting "godly men, who shall rule in the fear of God, and minister to the flock." The arch-enemy of Christ loves such phraseology in such a connection. Give him the appointing power through men who have no love for Christ, and who regard religion in the old pagan light, as a powerful political machine, and he will secure the dominance of pride, ambition, and avarice, in the holy kingdom of Christ. We wonder, and must wonder, that a merely philosophical mind starting from the premises, that Christ is going to organise an unworldly, unambitious, humble, unavaricious society in the earth, to be governed by principles directly antagonistical to the selfish and worldly policy of the unregenerated heart, should have believed that the very best way to secure that end, was to put the church directly or indirectly into the hands of men the most likely to combine, in their characters, ability and ambition. We

Digitized by Google

wonder that good men, in the days of Constantine, did not dread his enthusiastic patronage of the church as much as the persecuting zeal of Diocletian. The instant a man prescribes what other men must believe, and how they must worship, and whose ministry they must attend, under the pain of civil disabilities, he becomes a rival of Him who is sole Lord of the conscience in matters of faith, worship, and religious practice. An ecclesiastical body may declare its own convictions, and prescribe the terms of fellowship with itself; but that invades no man's rights of conscience, nor any prerogative of Christ, so far as the mere proclamation is concerned. If they advocate error indeed, they do invade it; but in another respect. The whole operation of the system of State patronage, even on so limited a scale as the *Regium Donum* of Ireland, is to a greater or less extent, an assumption of Christ's sole right to administer the spiritual government of the church. Whatever good men may say in favor of it, in any case, under the New Testament, its whole practical working has been to give Satan the control of Christ's church, to a greater or less extent. It ever has, indeed, and ever must induce a greater number of worldly men to administer the Word and ordinances of Christ's house, than would otherwise intrude themselves into the holy office. The very argument often urged in its favor, that it secures the respectable support of the clergy, is a proof of its evil nature. It secures the support of a clergy independent of the choice and judgment of religious men, and enables a worldly clergy to disregard the opinions of the very church for whose benefit Christ ordained the ministry.

The practical working of it, in every age, has been, to punish obedience to Christ, and to crush vital piety. Some, contrasting the period of Nero with that of Constantine, are ready to say, What a glorious advance the church made from the former to the latter! Yes, if the church is but another among the hundred contrivances for helping a few men to obtain power and wealth, that they may tread on the necks of better men. But thus far, for fifteen hundred years, these have been the melancholy results of this unhallowed connection; the bitterest persecutions have been instigated by State-supported bishops; and it has been the peculiarity of their persecutions, that they singled out the men most resembling Christ, for their hottest fires, while they spared the least godly; the deadly corruptions of Christianity, and those

Digitized by Google

the most widely spread and most firmly rooted, have been fostered under State-patronage; the grand hindrances to all true reformations of the church and religion have been such civil patrons of both as Henry VIII. and his daughter, Elizabeth; and such State-church ecclesiastics as Leo X., Laud, and Pius IX. We have only to inquire; But for these and such men, what would the English and the Roman churches now be! Considerable uniformity they do indeed secure. But it is, to a great extent, the uniformity of a heartless profession, and a hypocritical compliance. No sensible man believes that in any State-church the majority of the members have any reference to God in the matter. It is a decent, respectable, politic conformity to custom and law. As to its presenting the moral influence of the example of leading minds in favor of religion, it is a thing perfectly understood over all Europe, that it is a farce, so far as honoring God and a spiritual piety is concerned. It is a glaring cheat, an example of hypocrisy the most shameful, and disgusting to honest minds. The idea of Victoria, a worldly woman, and George IV., a debauchee, being the head of the English Church, is so absurd, that nothing but custom and loyalty reconciles to it the honest English mind.

Such a connection may spare the church some persecution; but rocks and caves have proved safer places for faith and humility, than Archbishops' palaces. No, this unholy alliance has suppressed the freedom of the human mind, deluged Europe with blood, and stayed the progress of truth. Witness Scotland, Holland, France, Belgium, Germany, England, Ireland. What district of Europe may we not cite to illustrate the position, that this hypocritical and unnatural alliance has been, for ten centuries, a fruitful source of massacres and wars in that unhappy, priest-ridden country? Shall we call back the bloody Claverhouse, the Duke of Alva, St. Bartholomew's Day, the thirty-years' war, Judge Jeffries, and the Council of Constance, to illustrate our meaning? Or, shall we content ourselves with more modern examples; and refer to our missionaries, obstructed in almost every foreign field by an open or concealed civil power, which has learned from the priesthood to despise the prerogatives alike of Christ and the human conscience? We refer to cases like those in Persia, and Tahiti, where our missionary brethren have as really been contending with the whole power of Louis

Digitized by Google

Philippe, as if they were secular diplomatists. What indeed is the recent disgraceful bombardment of Rome and its dependencies by the French and Austrians, but a declaration by politicians under ghostly direction, that the more thoroughly a people desire to separate the dominion of Christ from that of Cæsar, the more earnestly will all the State-church nations combine to crush their civil and their religious feedom? Historians describe the influence of the Episcopal system as having been very favorable to the interests of the people, by bringing its higher officers continually from the ranks of the people. But there is one natural inference which they have failed to draw from the history of these same bishops, who remind us of the African negro-drivers in the slave States, than whom, it is said, none are more cruel. Some of the keenest persecutors, and most efficient enemies of the people, and their rights and interests, have been these same bishops of plebeian origin.

It has been said that the bishops, by possessing civil power, became bulwarks of the church and of the poor, against the barons, and even against barbarian hordes. To this famous argument we would reply, that even if all that were unqualifiedly true, yet it has no applicableness to our day. We admit it to be very possible, that the reaction of paganism and barbarism might have swept away the very name of Christianity from large sections of Europe, if the civil and military power had not upheld it. But we are persuaded, that on the whole, it would have been better, if the State had always retained the attitude of neutrality, or even of hostility. The very power of these civil bishops to defend the church, was a power to corrupt it. Admit that the state protected the clergy, when without that protection, they would, in large districts, have been utterly annihilated; admit that the tranquillity of the monasteries, and the safety of their treasures of secular and ecclesiastical learning, were secured by this protection; admit that the clergy by their civil power helped the liberties of the people against the encroachment of aristocratic ambition; yet these benefits, however rich, were dearly purchased by a church despoiled of its spiritual strength, and gradually corrupted by its clergy, until it became what it was found to be by Luther, Zuingle, Calvin and Knox. Nay, it remains with us a question, Whether, as to the very point of the preservation of the church, the whole teaching of history does

Digitized by Google

not turn this argument back on the cause of those who employ it. Contrast, for instance, the persecuting Roman emperors in the second and third centuries, with the persecuting Roman pontiffs in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Pagan emperors could not stifle the new religion. But Christian pontiffs and kings did extirpate from their territories the reviving Christianity.

But we had not intended thus to set Mr. Noel aside. His arguments are very weighty, and very forcibly applied. Moses is effectually taken out of the hands of Mr. Noel's antagonists. He says, that in England, ministers are supported, and churches erected, by taxes imposed by the civil authority. In Israel, tithes were imposed by the command of God. The temple and synagogues were built and repaired on the "voluntary plan." In England, the State controls the ministers, passes ecclesiastical law; in a word, governs the church, as completely as it does the civil community. But the passages in Deut. xvii. 18, 19, and iv. 1, 2, shew the magistrate to be no law-maker in ecclesiastical matters. Nor is there any trace of an ecclesiastical law passed by a Jewish king. In England, the State appoints a large part of the church officers. In Israel the incomes of the priests were settled without the authority of the State; the priests were determined by God; kings and nobles could raise no unfit person to the ministry.* In Israel no congregation had a pastor imposed on them by the State. Thus our author carries on the comparison.

His examination of the natural influence of the Establishment upon every religious interest of his country, and even upon the government, is to us nothing less than overwhelming. We were compelled frequently to stop and exclaim as we read, Is it so indeed; is the "state of things in Denmark so rotten!" And will Englishmen suffer that volume to go forth to the world, and expose the loathsomeness of their very religion, without either soberly and fairly answering Mr. Noel, or correcting the abuses? The religious condition of the Anglican Church, is nothing less than horrible. South Carolina slavery has no features so dark and revolting, if you test it by the higher standard of man's spiritual interest. If simony is more wicked

* The author of course must there refer to the purer ages of the Jewish Church.

Digitized by Google

than oppression, then put, for instance, one of our scandalous advertisements of the sale of human beings by the side of such auctioneer's advertisements for the sale of the pastoral office as Mr. Neel has copied. No church or parish can deliver itself from the ministrations of a man, simply on the ground of his being a sportsman, a dancer, and a card-player; no, nor even if worse things are proved upon him in a court of justice. But the most beloved pastor may be driven from his people, and even excommunicated, for saying, that the Queen is not the Head of the Church. "The worst felon cannot be condemned, without trial before a jury; but a minister of Christ, of the highest qualifications, the greatest capacity, and the most devoted zeal, may be driven from his flock, deprived of his income, and sent forth an exile from the diocese, without any trial; nay, without any reason, except the autocratic fiat of the Ordinary. And this has been reënacted during the present reign!" Nor can the bishop of any other diocese receive that man! And yet England is the land of freedom, of the writ of habeas corpus, and of trial by jury.

In other churches, if a minister changes his opinions on points essential to the existence of that church, he either quietly separates himself from it, or goes out under an ecclesiastical censure. But in the Church of England if a minister comes to think that children are not regenerated by water-baptism, or that Queen Victoria is not the fountain of doctrine and power in the church, he is not only excommunicated, but he is chased into the civil courts, and even into prison, if he dares to preach in an unconsecrated building, or without a bishop's license. So Mr. Keith and Mr. Shore have learned from sad experience. They have found out how powerful "the church" is, by being excommunicated in a bishop's court, reported to chancery, and having the writ *de excommunicato capiendo* issued against them. Here is persecution, genuine and rampant, in that church which glories in being the model church of the world. Indeed the whole system seems to be constructed for the purpose of fettering, perverting, and depressing the members and ministers of that church, just in proportion to their godliness. An ungodly bishop, or pastor, or member, finds no kingly or ecclesiastical power arrayed against his worldliness and unfaithfulness; but the godly bishop will find himself shackled in his endeavors to secure competent and faithful pastors to the flocks of his diocese. He will find the Establish-

Digitized by Google

ment, as an institution, a constant source of obstruction and discouragement in the discharge of his most sacred duties. He may mourn over false doctrine, oppressive canons, growing superstition, the want of discipline, the want of fellowship among Christians, cold and formal preaching; but it is in vain that he complains, or moves toward amending the state of things. On every side he is met by a cold, dead, monstrous system of worldly policy that mocks at his griefs, and defies his innovations. The pious members may long to see the pulpits occupied by a godly ministry; but, as Mr. Noel inquires, "When peerages and palaces, deaneries and prebendal stalls, masterships and fellowships, rich livings and pleasant mansions, glitter before the eyes of young men as rewards of clerical talent, how can they fail to be attracted by them?" See, too, his description of a young man born in obscurity, rising through the several grades of his profession, until he attracts the favorable notice of some Premier, and is exalted to a bishopric:

"How can one, whose position was so humble, become at once so lofty without giddiness? That smile of a statesman has made him at once a peer, the master of a palace, the owner of a lordly revenue, the successor of apostles. Thenceforth he shines in parliament, and moves amid the most splendid circles of the wealthiest nation of the earth: or, retiring to his palace, he administers within its baronial precincts an extended patronage, wields an absolute sceptre over one third of the clergy, and by an indefinite prerogative awes and controls the rest; meets with no one to question his opinions, or contradict his will; and may look along a lengthened vista of enjoyments to the more dazzling splendor and prerogatives of Lambeth. If a man under these circumstances, is not deteriorated, he must have extraordinary wisdom and virtue. To the efficiency of most men as ministers of the gospel, these circumstances would be fatal. They would cease to be pastors; their preaching would become lordly, heartless, and unfrequent; and they would grow worldly, covetous, self-indulgent, proud, and imperious."

The nomenclature of the church, too, betrays the pride which it fosters in its ministry. "Seldom are the clergy of the Establishment called pastors, ministers, or presbyters; but they are called prelates, *prælati*, advanced before others; dignitaries; rectors, *rectores*, rulers; incumbents, *incumbens*, a load to be supported; parsons, *personæ*, the chief persons of the parish.* And

* Some, like Coleridge, say that they are called *personæ*, because they *personate* the church. Eds.

Digitized by Google

their office instead of being called the pastoral charge, or episcopate (supervision,) is termed, a living, or that which will enable the incumbent to live; a benefice, *beneficium*, a thing for his advantage; and a preferment, a thing to advance him in the world." These terms betray the prevalent feeling in the Establishment; and true Christians in that institution can never hope for other than a worldly ministry, in general, while the system continues to exist.

But the root of the whole evil is, at last, the point which the Scottish Church has made prominent in all her controversies and struggles with the State; — the interference with the kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his sole authority in the church. And with a quotation from Mr. Noel's work, on that point, we will close our reference to him.

"Christ has condescended to represent the church in Scripture as his bride, and himself as the husband of the church. And because the Church of Rome has given to others the honor due to him, it is termed in the Word of God, a harlot, and every church in communion with that corrupt church, is termed a harlot too. (Rev. xviii. 1, 2, 5.) Whenever, therefore, any church allows one who is without Christ's authority to rule over it, it is acting as a wife who should allow a stranger to rule over her in her husband's absence. That church would be guilty of adultery as Rome has been. And all this is what the Church of England has done. It is of no avail for an advocate of the union to allege that the king is only head of the church under Christ. Where is Christ's appointment? Did our Lord appoint the profligate Charles II., or the Romanist James II., to be his vicegerent?"

Having extended these remarks already so far, we may not trespass farther by referring to the third part of Mr. Noel's work, which is virtually an appendix most naturally affixed by a godly man to whom the question is supreme, How shall true religion be revived in our country, even while the Establishment remains?

Nor can we now present the case of Mr. Frederic Monod, who occupies an equally prominent position in relation to the church in France, and who has already commenced the formation of a Free Church.

It is said, that our American churches will hear from both these gentlemen, in person, their own account of this great enterprize. Most welcome will they be to our sanctuaries, and our dwellings.

Digitized by Google

GOD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENTS.

THE judgments of God upon the heathen, whether found in guilty Babylon or rebellious Moab, among the polluted Canaanites or elsewhere, are all just; and are as far proportioned to the different degrees of guilt, as ought to be expected in a world where perfect retribution does not exist. Through these judgments, Jehovah is more and more manifested in the earth, not only in the times when the judgments are experienced, but in all subsequent time. What instructive lessons of wisdom are found in the dealings of God with the heathen for centuries past! What moral degradation has abounded in the earth on account of idolatry! What pollution and crime! What wrath and contention! What desolation and wo! These things are too well known to need description. Infanticide, abandonment and exposure of the sick and aged, self-immolations, offerings of human beings to idol gods with various circumstances of cruelty and horror, the widow expiring upon the funeral pile of her deceased husband, the horrid pleasure of eating the bodies of enemies slain in battle; these, and other things of like character, have been the accompaniments and results of heathenism, in large portions of the world, and for a long succession of ages.

The judgments of God upon the heathen, have been in forms as various as their crimes and abominations. Among these, desolating wars have occupied a conspicuous place. Nations have risen up against nations, and gone forth to the murderous conflict; little aware that in the desolations they have made, they have been executing the divine displeasure against their idolatries and attendant vices. We may never be able to enter into the reasons in the Divine Mind, why God has suffered the nations so long to remain without the light and blessings of the gospel. But we know that all they have suffered has come upon them *justly*. Let us rejoice that He who is able to make all things, even the wrath of man to praise him, is more and more known by the judgments which He has been for centuries executing upon the heathen. The display of his perfections through these judgments has not instructed the heathen alone, but all people and tongues where his truth has been revealed. Oftentimes the convulsions among the nations, by which the divine indignation against their

Digitized by Google

sins has been manifested, have opened the way for the entrance of the light of life. Even where ambition and cupidity have been employed to make inroads upon idolatrous nations, they have been overruled for the purpose of making Jehovah known. The thunder of the British cannon, though uttered at the call of avarice, has yet been the voice of the Lord, saying to the heathen in India and China, "I am God alone." The human instruments of these judgments are themselves accountable for all the wrongs they have done in the exercise of covetousness, and the lust of power. But they have inflicted no greater judgments than the idolaters deserved; and by means of those judgments the Lord is making himself known to thousands upon thousands, as a just God and a Saviour. There is not a spot on heathen soil, where the missionary of the cross is now preaching salvation through a crucified Saviour, where the way was not first prepared by the judgments of the Lord.

Perhaps the most signal instance which has made the Lord known by his judgments upon the heathen, is found in the African race. Although the crime of enslaving men has extensively prevailed in almost all ages and countries, yet the ill-fated African has been its greatest victim. There is no plausibility in that interpretation of the Bible, which refers all the sufferings of the negroes to the curse pronounced upon Canaan; — for the very good reason, that the descendants of Canaan settled in Palestine, and *there* committed the crimes, and experienced the judgments, of which we have already spoken.* Those who find in the woes of Africa the verification of the Patriarch's malediction, — "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be," — have about as much reason to authorize their conclusions as the Poet Burns had, when he made the candidate for ordination tell:

> "How graceless Ham laughed at his dad
> Which made Canaan a niger."

But whatever may be the solution of the Providence, the Africans have been great sufferers in bondage. Millions of their race have been torn from their homes, and doomed to hopeless servitude, involving in the dreadful calamity, their children and children's children. Facts in relation to their unparalleled afflictions

* See Page 377 of the current volume of this work.

Digitized by Google

are too notorious to need a particular notice here. The attention of the whole civilized world is so much roused to the consideration of them, as to preclude the danger of their being either forgotten or neglected. In such a state of the public mind, it is important to inculcate the true principles of the divine administration, which are concerned in the fortunes of the negro. Those who may have oppressed and wronged the African, from motives of avarice, are no more to be justified, than was the Assyrian who laid waste Judea, to gratify his ambition. All oppressors, though they are rods in the hand of God for the chastisement of rebellious man, shall themselves answer for their crimes to the Judge of all the earth.

But the Africans themselves, who have suffered so dreadfully at the hands of man, have they received any injustice at the hands of God? By no means. No such imputations can be thrown upon the government of the all-wise and benevolent God. The Africans, as a race, have been sinners exceedingly in the sight of the Lord, and have deserved all the pains, and griefs, and toils, through which from generation to generation they have passed. They have been heathens of the most degraded and polluted kind. They have come within the range of all the tremendous judgments threatened against those who refuse the knowledge and worship of God, and serve their own lusts. The imprecation of Jeremiah lies heavy upon them. "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name." It is true, that idolatry among the Africans has not existed in such systematic form as in India, and some of the islands of the sea. But it has existed in reality, and in its most odious features. The abominations that have usually cursed every society rejecting the light that leads to heaven, have been found in Africa,— not even excluding cannibalism. The very crime in whose giant embrace they themselves have been crushed for centuries, has been, from the earliest records of its existence, practised by the Africans. Not only among themselves have been traced marks of the most ignominious bondage, but of friend as well as foe, of their nearest kindred, of their helpless children, have they furnished slaves for the markets of foreign nations. All this they have done when they have had not only the light of nature, but frequent glimmerings of the lamp of revelation to teach them otherwise.

Digitized by Google

And shall not God visit the nations for such aggravated sins and abominations? If He chooses to employ wicked men as his instruments of vengeance, like Sennacherib of old, who shall resist his will? And if the mode of his punishment be involuntary servitude, instead of famine and pestilence, or the destroying sword, or the engulphing earthquake, or the overwhelming eruptions of the volcano; has he not a right to make his own selection? Cannot his wisdom foresee as much good to his creation from his judgments upon guilty men written upon the cotton-fields of America, as when they are traced in Lisbon laid low, or Herculaneum buried? In his boundless knowledge, our adorable Maker is not confined to any one method of making himself known by the judgments which he executes.

Bancroft, in his History of the United States, speaking of the wholesale operations of the slave-trade, by which Great Britain supplied the colonies after the treaty of Utrecht, says: — "The purchases in Africa were made in part of convicts punished with slavery, or mulcted in a fine, which was discharged by their sale; of debtors sold, though but rarely, into foreign bondage; of children sold by their parents; of kidnapped villagers; of captives taken in war. Hence the sea-coasts and the confines of hostile nations were laid waste. *But the chief source of supply was from swarms of those born in a state of slavery*; for the despotisms, the superstitions, and the usages of Africa had multiplied bondage. In some parts of the continent, *three fourths* of the population were slaves, and the slave's master was absolute lord of the slave's children. Humanity did not respect itself in any of its forms, in the individual, in the family, or in the nation."

Such was the state of Africa a century and a half ago,— such substantially is it now, — suffering the judgments of God at home, for long continued heathenism, with its attendant crime and pollution; and sending forth her children to suffer elsewhere for the same causes, and on a gigantic scale. The suffering of the whole race, generation after generation, helpless children for the crimes of others, involves the same *mystery* in the dealings of God, which has been spoken of before. On a vast theatre is this mystery presented, but equally grand is that one whereon Jehovah is yet to be made known by means of his long continued judgments upon Africa. Is He not already spreading the knowledge of himself through these judgments? Have not the nations long

Digitized by Google

been taught the power and holiness of God in these tokens of his hot displeasure against the neglect of his worship and service? His judgments upon the sable race are making him known to their very *oppressors*, who have the opportunity to learn more and more clearly how awful it is for any people to fall into the hands of the living God, in a state of disobedience to his laws. How different now are the convictions of men, as to the sin of slave-holding, and as to the views of God respecting it, from what they would have been without that display of the divine judgments, which has been in modern times connected with the negro! How much more extensive and appalling now than formerly, is the dread of impending retribution among the very men whose selfish interests still induce them to trade in human sinews, or enjoy the avails of unrequited labor!

In these ways is God making himself known by his judgments upon Africa; and yet more by overruling these judgments for the ultimate good of her children. Here is a great theme; too great to be fully comprehended; but suited, when adequately considered, to fill us with adoring views of the great Ruler of all. Let us not approach it without bowing the knee to the God of all grace, humbly supplicating his guidance, that we may not err. Far from us be every apology for slavery. It is contrary to the spirit of the gospel, and must disappear with the prevalence of Christianity. But let us rejoice in every opportunity afforded us of seeing how God, the all-wise and all-gracious, can make the wrath of man to praise him, and cause that a long series of dreadful sufferings shall in the end subserve the highest happiness of the very race on whom the direst calamities have spent their fury. That he is overruling all events for the future glorious establishment of the reign of Jesus Christ his Son, we know from the plain declarations of his Word; but to the pious mind it is very grateful to survey those exemplifications of this sublime truth, which are of great extent and notoriety. What a delightful anticipation is thus gained of the spiritual blessings that are yet to come upon the world, in the successive developments of the divine plans of mercy towards our ruined race!

But how shall we speak of the good derived to the negro, and to all the families of man, from those judgments which have fallen so severely, and for so long a time on Africa? Shall we do it by way of palliating the offences of slave-dealing and slave-hold-

Digitized by Google

ing? We have already guarded ourselves against such an inference. The good has been accomplished in spite of the deep guilt which has stained the skirts of the oppressors of the African. They meant it not; it was not so much as in the thoughts of their hearts; and yet God, in using them as instruments of chastising the heathen for their abominations, has also used them as the means of extending among men, — the Africans especially,— the blessings of his salvation.

We have spoken of the great crimes and deep miseries of the African from age to age. We have no reason to suppose that this state of things would have been essentially changed to the present time, had it not been for the African slave-trade, filling distant lands with enslaved negroes. But through that traffic, detestable as it is, what wonders have been wrought! Millions of the descendants of negro slaves are now free in different parts of this our Western World. Most of these enjoy blessings which would surely have been denied them, had they been born on the banks of the Gambia or the Senegal. The light of civilization has shone upon them, if not so clearly as upon others in their vicinity, yet sufficiently to dispel the darkness of Paganism. Instruction has found its way to their minds; comforts have come to their dwellings; and far more than all, and as the foundation of all, Christianity has spoken to them of the hopes of immortal life. If these inestimable blessings have not been so freely dispensed to them as could be desired, yet how richly have they been bestowed, when compared with the lot of those who now inhabit the land of their forefathers!

And these privileges of civilization and Christianity, are constantly increasing; and the numbers constantly increasing who are hereafter to enjoy them.

Will not the very blessing which is now so eagerly sought, the entire and universal emancipation of the slave, be sooner accomplished, and more gloriously, as to its wide results, by means of the chains and fetters in which he has been brought to the shores of the new world? Have not the dealings of God with the African, expanded the race, and put them in positions better calculated to call forth their powers? Through the judgments which have carried them captive to far different and distant countries, have they not been in a state of preparation for freedom, which could never have reached them through any other channel?

Digitized by Google

And will not Africa herself, be sooner free, civilized and Christian, through the return to her shores, of many of her sons, who have been taught in remote regions, the wisdom and grace that are in Christ Jesus? Would there at this moment be such extensive interest felt in the Christianization of Africa, were it not for the colonies on her shores, which have grown out of the judgments of God upon her sons, followed by those signal mercies to which his judgments so often lead? Will not the curse of slavery and of the slave-trade *in Africa itself*, be smitten down and destroyed with far greater expedition, on account of the light which has been thrown upon these abominations from slavery discussions in the New World?

In heathen Africa, those who are held in bondage, are almost entirely excluded from the knowledge of the way of life through a Saviour; whereas thousands who are held in American slavery, in spite of guilty efforts to keep them in ignorance, gain such a knowledge of Christ as leads them to heaven when they die. Now these blessed results which God is bringing out of the judgments he has poured upon Africa, are but just beginning to be seen. There is a glorious future. Emancipated, made Christian, elevated to a proper place among the inhabitants of the earth, what honors yet await the African in his wide dispersion and vast numerical strength, — honors, and powers, and influences in extending the blessings of Christ's kingdom, which could never have been his, without those terrible preparations through the judgments of the Lord, by which he is making himself known in the earth. Shall we not rejoice in these great results of the Providence of God; while we can both see and denounce the avarice, cruelty, and ambition, with which in man's agency they have been so intimately connected?

The same principles of interpretation will apply, in the appropriate circumstances, to all the dealings of God with the heathen of every age and country. Is it not plain, that he is making himself known more and more extensively and gloriously, not only as the God of power, but as the God of grace, by his present providential dispensations upon the heathen world? Is he not rapidly preparing the way by this means for the establishment of his spiritual kingdom in all the earth? Blessed be his name, that his word authorizes us to give an affirmative answer to these interesting inquiries!

Digitized by Google

THE TRUE FOUNDATION.

When the church is said to be founded upon "the apostles and prophets; Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone," it is an exhibition of her relations both to Christ and the Scriptures. His incarnation, death, and intercession, are the primary ground of the church's existence, and of the believer's salvation. The Scriptures written by the inspired servants of the Lord, are the instrumental agency by which personal Christian character is formed; and by which the church, or body of regenerated persons, is originated and sustained. This great principle was rescued from a long oblivion by the Reformation. But very many reforming processes will be required to secure its thorough application.

It is but too manifest, for example, that, both in the estimate and in the formation of Christian character, the Word of God does not generally occupy its appropriate place. Every element of moral excellence may be found in the precepts and examples of Scripture, especially in the character of Christ. And there can be no goodness which does not combine those elements, to a greater or less extent. Now, the unbelieving, in attempting the improvement of their own characters, have no reference to Christ. They disregard him alike, whether as the source of reconciliation to God, or as the source of all spiritual improvement, or as the model of all excellence. And there is but too much and too sad proof, that this unbelief greatly prevails in the church.

The great and glorious fact, that the renewal of the heart begins in justification, — in the free, full, and eternal remission of sin, through the blood of Christ, extended to every penitent believer, — is not the foundation of the hopes and confidence of the great body of Christians. They will indeed fly to it, when their opinion is called for, or their creed is in question. But we may confidently say, from the present manifestations of piety, that the church is exceedingly deficient on this point. There is a want of the simple and unqualified establishment of the soul in the faith of Christ, as "bearing our sins." We fear too, that Christ is not extensively studied as a model. An extensive change in these two practical points would produce great changes in the condition and influence of the church. Now, it seems to be sufficient for the greater part, that they pass current among their friends and

Digitized by Google

acquaintances. The resemblance, or the want of resemblance to Christ, appears not to be a matter of supreme importance. Now we see few who manifest an earnest desire to obtain complete and definite views of the character of the Saviour; few who appear to have made that character the standard by which all their judgments of men are formed. Suppose now, every person hoping for heaven by Christ, should truly build on Christ's redemption as the basis of reconciliation with God, and on Christ's word as at once the guarantee of perfection and the guide to it, these results would at once appear. The church would be a happy community; stable, spiritual, and grateful. Now, Christians vacillate. At one moment they are peaceful, resting in the glorious sufficiency of Christ and his mediation. Then they get off to the old legal ground of despondency and fear, in the remembrance of their sins.

There is a great defect here in the present religious experience of the church. There is somehow a wrong start. The convert obtains peace by a simple reliance on Christ. But he does not know how to cleave to Christ, as an anchor-hold for life. The process of becoming "rooted and grounded in love," does not seem to be well understood among us; and the same deficiency is seen in regard to sanctification. In order to become good, we must become like Christ. And in order to reach to that high attainment, the character of Christ must be familiarly known, and understood with discriminating perception. Nothing is to be considered as really good which was not in that character. And every thing that was in it, must be required for complete excellence in us. But what a visible and most desirable change would it make in the social intercourse of Christians, and in the tone of their religious conferences and meetings for prayer, if the question were continually uppermost with them, Do we conform to the image of Christ? The study of the Scriptures, with this practical end in view, would be productive of a corresponding vitality, simplicity, cordiality, earnestness, and prayerfulness; in place of the present formality, separateness, coldness, and cheerlessness of much that is called worship, and ought to be the living communion of the saints. When a company of architects come together for the purpose of advancing the interests of their profession, they talk earnestly and instructively about the buildings they may at the time have in hand, the various materials, the best places for

Digitized by Google

procuring them, the best instruments of their trade, and the most serviceable modes of employing them. And each one goes away from such a conference a wiser builder, and better prepared for his work. So should it be with them who are building for eternity, on the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Another practical result of the church's improvement in this respect, would be seen in changing the general standard of character, as applicable to the living and the dead. Is he like Christ? Was he like Christ? are the questions which should guide our examination of character. Were the church rigidly to adhere to this principle, she would rapidly change the moral judgment of the world. If every one who receives the Scriptures as the true standard of good and evil, should apply it thoroughly to men and things, in the past and the present; in conversation, in books, and in papers, in the pulpit and in the family; the conscience of mankind would ultimately be brought to conform to it, as much as in regard to the grosser vices which Christianity has banished? In this free country, where men can reject all assumed dominion on the part of the church, they are more open to its proper influence, than in any other nation. Let a few men for instance, at Andover, get together, to form a right conscience in regard to intemperance; and in a few years the whole country is awake to the work of reformation. It is so in regard to slavery, the profanation of the Lord's day, or any thing else which is not according to the mind of God. "Ye are the light of the world; ye are the salt of the earth." It seems to us perfectly in the power of good men, within a few years, to have the whole conscience of this country brought to adopt the character of Jesus Christ as the true model and standard. Let the heroes of our own and other days, the philanthropists and the reformers, be brought to this test; let the profession of piety be tried by this; let covetousness, pride, ambition, oppression, unkindness, political frauds, slander, censoriousness, and other vices not now disapproved in the great, be brought to this infallible test, — Is it like Christ? The moral atmosphere would certainly undergo a great purification; men and events would assume a new aspect. Then society itself, would begin to feel the stability which an immovable foundation secures. For this is the incidental benefit of Christianity, that although it preserves the soul from destruction only by penetrating the heart, yet it preserves the temporal welfare of man, and the existence

Digitized by Google

of society, by merely forming the individual and the public conscience.

But there is another aspect of this subject, in its application to the estimate we are to form of books inculcating religious doctrine or duty. If they are doctrinal, then we demand that they build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, by being purely exegetical, or expository of what those inspired authors wrote. If they are practical, then we demand of them, that they carry us to the same foundation.

We have lately read three books. One need be named no more specifically, than by saying that it professes to give a new view of a fundamental doctrine in Christianity, more true, more profound, more rational, and more beneficial, than any that mankind has ever before conceived. The others are the Memoirs of Robert McCheyne, and the Memoirs of Madame Guyon.

The first of these is an expository treatise. It professes to instruct mankind in the profound realities of divine existence, revelation, and redemption. The test to which we bring it, is this: Does it lead us to the Bible? The church is built, not on the speculations or intuitions of an individual mind, not on the brilliant deductions of the acutest of human or angelic intellects. When, therefore, one pretends to come as a Christian teacher, expounding the doctrines of Christ, we demand of him, first, that he explain the Scriptures. He may be critical or rhetorical. He may minutely analyze words, or he may form his argument chiefly from the scope and context, and the analogy of faith. But his work must at last expound the Word of God, as contained in the infallible revelation. Otherwise, it is no more to us than the reveries of Swedenborg. It matters not to our argument, to what book we now refer. We threw it aside, because it appeared to be, not an exposition or explanation of the Scriptures; but, a rival revelation. The author knew, or appears to think he knew, much about God, that is not in the Bible. He aims to rectify many of the misapprehensions which a mere exposition of the Scriptures would create. He rejects some things which the writers of the Bible make fundamental in religion. We, therefore, reject him as an expounder. Had he pretended to be a revealer, we should have respected, at least, his boldness and frankness. But, as it was, we could hardly reconcile it even to honesty, that he should pretend to be a teacher of Christian doc-

Digitized by Google

trine; and then, not even condescending to explain the language of the Bible, should substitute a totally different system for that which it contains.

We demand of one who teaches Christian doctrine, secondly, that he lead us to the Bible. Whether he preach or print, we ask when his voice ceases to be heard, or our eye turns from his pages, Has he led us to the Word of God, with new light and new delight? Do we now sympathize more deeply with Moses or Isaiah, with Paul or James, than we did before? If not, that preacher or writer is rejected by us. And how was it with this author? Did we, by reason of reading his book, love Paul any the more? Could we enter any more joyously, into his sublime views of Christ's incarnation, humiliation, and intercession? Could we understand and prize more fully his earnest exhibitions of justification by faith? No; the farthest from it! The author might object to this test. But if the church were to abandon it, Christianity would soon perish under the rubbish of human speculations, and the wood, hay, and stubble of a "vain philosophy."

Let us now turn to two works of a practical character, and ask the same question concerning them, Do they lead to the Bible? When we take up McCheyne in any part, sermons, letters, or diary, we feel ourselves breathing the very atmosphere of the Scriptures. We are in communion with a mind which has been studying the Scriptures, grasping their broad and profound truths, feeling their mighty energy, and breathing their celestial atmosphere. We know that he has been communing with the sacred authors; their words have exercised his understanding; their thoughts have possessed him; he has been an humble, fervent learner. We are particularly impressed with this mark of a Scriptural writer; he has breadth and expansiveness in his thought. He has touched the infinite on every side of his subject; he pursues one definite object; but when he has seized it, there is still more that he has not comprehended, than that which is comprehended. In other words, he grapples with our minds just as the Bible does.

But our impressions were very different on reading the sketch of Madame Guyon. We see much to admire and to imitate. But we also find an impression left on our minds which is not Scriptural. We experience a sense of meagreness; an increased tendency in ourselves to strive in a legal way after perfection;

Digitized by Google

a want of deep, reverential views of the divine attributes; a want of exalted views of Christ, as the Head of the church, the fountain of sanctifying power. In a word, it does not recall us to the Bible. It is not a Pauline type of piety. We can easily conceive how it could remain in the fellowship of the Roman Church, as we feel sure that Paul's could not have done.

It would be unfair to present this as a criticism on this work. Our object rather is, by means of these three works, to illustrate the principle, that our religion commences in the study of the Scriptures, is nourished by the Scriptures, and only by such books as harmonize with them. It is of great importance that they who are striving after holiness, should test sermons, books, and all other moral instruments, by this one question, Do they help me to build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets?

THE CHURCHES WARNED.

God's providential dealings with the Church convey a solemn warning, to beware how we treat the blessings and privileges of the gospel, lest they be removed, and given to others. To learn from the past, is wise; for then we may draw from the fountains of experience, and gather the knowledge of those principles, by which our heavenly Father is carrying on the government of his moral empire, while rearing out of the ruins of an apostate race, a spiritual kingdom of sanctified and happy souls.

To illustrate the point before us, we shall refer to some facts in the history of the church, which utter a warning voice to all times. It is a truth, obvious to every reader of the Bible, that there are limits, beyond which God will not follow the reckless and impious transgressor with calls of mercy, and the restraining influences of the Spirit. And the sinner may reach that point long before he is aware. So, there is a boundary in God's providential dealings with the Church, where if she forget her privileges and her obligations, and continues her wanderings from duty, the rod of her heavenly Father will overtake her in reproof and chastisement; and if these fail of their end, and means and motives, entreaties and warnings, lose their effect, there is an

Digitized by Google

ultimate limit, where sentence of abandonment is pronounced,— "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate!" The pages of providence affirm, in many a solemn and interesting lesson, written for the instruction and admonition of the church, that, if *she reaches a given point of declension*, God will remove the kingdom, and give it others who will bring forth the fruits thereof.

The first fact, to which we invite attention, is from *Jewish History*. The seed of Abraham were "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people!" The city of David, the temple, the altar, the land of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles,— do they not fulfil the sad prediction of the Saviour? This chosen and favored people of the Lord, blessed in this life, and that which is to come, "with salvation for their walls, and their gates praise," said, "Our mountain stands fast, and will never be moved." In this feeling, they became secure, and tried the patience of God; and in their pride and self-righteousness, they lightly esteemed their rich inheritance, corrupted their religion, and hardened themselves against exhortations, prayers, warnings, mercies, and judgments, until heaven would bear no longer, and "took from them the vineyard, and let it out unto other husbandmen." And ever since, they have felt the power of God. They have wandered over the face of the earth, outcasts and exiles from the covenant of promise. Has not the frown of Heaven rested upon them, and the land of their birth? Have not their homes and their privileges, "been trodden down by the foot of the Gentiles?"

Facts, bearing on this subject, may be gathered from other sources, equally in point. Over extensive territories, where once flourished churches, pure in doctrine, and holy in practice; where consecrated talent served at the altar, where the people of God labored and prayed, where the joyful accents of mercy were heard, and songs of salvation sung, there is now the silence of death. Paganism and imposture, have taken possession of the soil; and the fires kindled of heaven are extinguished in night. Ages since, the gospel delivered its last warning, and departed.

This is true of Africa. History tells us, that once, on her shores, there were seats of science, and temples erected for the worship of the true God, in which assembled large, stable, and energetic churches, walking in "the faith once delivered to the saints," and adorned with the beauty of holiness. But, where

Digitized by Google

are those churches now? Their prosperity declined, until their sun sunk beneath the horizon. The fatal leaven of the world pervaded them; the strength of moral principle began to relax; the love of many grew cold; "philosophy, falsely so called," corrupted the doctrines of the Bible; disputes and contentions rent the household of faith; and the idolizing of wealth and honors, with neglected vows, and deserted duties, completed the sad picture. The forms of godliness only remained; the power had fled. No wonder their light was turned into darkness. Centuries rolled by, and scarce one ray of light from the book of revelation, fell on that land of darkness, degradation, and sorrow. How affecting the evidence, that sin robs men of their choicest blessings!

Let the friends of humanity and religion rejoice, that the morning star of hope and promise, is beginning to rise on the sons of Africa. The songs of salvation are again heard on her shores. The exiled Bible is returning to the land of Ham, to break the chains of oppression, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison-doors to them that are bound. The work is begun. And may God speed it in his own time, till he bring forth judgment unto victory!

Similar facts, meet you on the plains of Asia. The heart sickens, as the eye passes over this immense field, every where swarming with inhabitants; involved in paganism and infidelity, and nominal Christianity not much better than paganism; degraded, ignorant, polluted, and groaning under the iron hand of sin and despotism. Here, was the cradle of the human family. Here the Son of God appeared in the flesh, and wrought out redemption for man. Here his apostles were commissioned "to teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Here, they lived, labored, travelled over extended regions, preached the gospel of the kingdom, organized churches, and witnessed glorious revivals; and then, their work being done, they went to their reward in heaven.

Visit those places now. How sad their condition! Your eye will affect your heart, as you survey "the desolations of many generations." The valley of bones is exceedingly dry; and no breath of heaven breathes upon them. There is there no day of holy rest, no solemn assembly, no true worship of the living God, no sweet song of Zion, ascending to the Redeemer from grateful hearts. All is the gloom of death. Every object around

Digitized by Google

proclaims the fact, that God's patience can be exhausted; and that perverted blessings, and wasted privileges, will be removed, and given to others who will make a better improvement. O, had those churches, planted and watered by apostles, continued steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints; if they had stood aloof from the traditions of men, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, aiming only to conquer the world in the name of Christ and by "the Word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit," they had remained until this hour, stars in the East, sending their light from afar to cheer the nations.

In the history of the churches of modern Europe, and God's providential dealings with them, there are not wanting facts and lessons, alike instructive and convincing, on the subject in hand. Look into the history of Germany, France, Spain, or Italy. But, passing by these, let us come nearer home, and look, for a moment, at our own history. We shall find it by no means deficient in interest, or wanting in admonitions. Our fathers came to these shores, not as adventurers in a worldly enterprise; but sent of God, to seek a rest for themselves, and for the ark of the covenant. We love to dwell on their origin, and follow up their early history, so marked with God's protecting care; so full of his presence, of faith, of sound doctrine, of prayer, of unity, of brotherly love, and of an energetic piety, that shrank from no self-denials and sacrifices. The founders of these churches, have left the strong impression of themselves, in their institutions and works,— a rich inheritance to their sons, an inestimable blessing to the world.

But, how has it been with these churches, planted by our fathers? Have they all stood firm on the foundation laid in Zion, elect and precious? Have they all remained true to their Lord and Master? No. Even in New England, there are churches, whose spirituality seems extinct, and which "have a name to live, while they are dead." And how can it be otherwise, when their system of religious belief is so slightly elevated above the religion of nature? The entire alienation of the heart from God, the atonement of Christ as the foundation of the pardon of sin, and revivals as the work of the Holy Spirit, are denied. From such churches, the Holy Ghost withholds his quickening showers of grace, leaving them like the mountains of Gilboa, on which descend neither dew nor rain. What if they have splendid

Digitized by Google

temples, ample funds, and the forms and rites of religion? Winter, dreary winter is there, and there are no signs of returning summer. In vain we look for the kingdom, among those who "deny the Lord that bought them," and "count the blood wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing."

Here we see, that a good beginning, an orthodox creed, a pious ancestry, and external prosperity, furnish no guarantee against the seductions of sin, declension in spirituality, and the coming of an evil day to the fairest portion of God's heritage, or to individual churches in the midst of it. Here are lessons we shall do well to study. If we forsake the Lord, he will forsake us. If we undervalue and abuse our blessings and Christian privileges, they will be taken away, and given to others bringing forth the fruits in the season thereof. So hath God affirmed, and so hath he done; and who shall disannul it?

Having illustrated the point we proposed in this article, we call upon every Christian pastor and church to say, Whether they wish to retain their rich inheritance, or not? Whether the kingdom shall remain, or be removed? This is a solemn question. And it is not to be determined by our professions, but by our lives. If we would hold fast our interest in the gospel, and prevent its blessings and privileges from being taken away, there are some things, which must be seriously attended to. We call attention to these, to awaken, if possible, ourselves and our readers, to higher and holier aims in the service of God.

We say, then, as a first thing, we must not feel secure from danger. Our safety depends not a little on the fact, that we feel our exposure. Hence, the repeated warnings on the page of revelation, and the voices speaking out of God's providential dealings with his people. The Jews, in their degeneracy, would not believe that there was real danger of the removal of their blessings. So self-righteous were they, and so blinded by the influence of sin, that they heeded not the warnings of their own prophets; but said in their infatuation, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these!" And thus they continued to do, till their ruin was sealed. Think ye, that the churches planted by the apostles, or those that once adorned the shores of Africa, expected their light ever to go out? Far from it. They felt secure, when they should have been alarmed; they slept, while "the enemy sowed tares." And are *we* safe? Are our

Digitized by Google

churches safe? No; only as we are faithful, watchful, and bring forth the fruits of the kingdom. Our own history admonishes us. There are *waste places*, even in this favored part of Zion; and briars and thorns are coming up around some of our altars, and the fires kindled upon them are waning. Little did our fathers expect, that in New England, the candlesticks would be removed from their place. And much less, that within two centuries, in some of the richest fields of their labors, in the college of their hopes and prayers, and over the graves of their sleeping dust, "another gospel would be preached, and not after Christ."

Again; we must not forget where our strength is. We are to cherish a deep sense of dependence on God; and to let go an arm of flesh, that we may take hold of eternal strength. In the best periods of the church, such a dependence has been felt and witnessed, in an uncommon spirit of prayer, attended with an humble confidence in the grace and promises of God. And could we see more of this spirit in the churches; could we see them firmly leaning on the declarations of the Saviour, as their only hope, trusting in his merit for all they need, there would be a new power imparted to the gospel. Its course would be onward, and its triumphs more glorious; surmounting every obstacle in its way, and demolishing the strong-holds of sin and Satan.

The doctrine of dependence on God may be a part of our creed, and yet not be felt as it ought to be; and therefore fail to exert its proper and practical influence over us. This feeling is not more the element of humility and confidence, than it is the essential element of holy activity, in the life of the Christian. The Psalmist understood this subject, when he said: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." And the apostle affirmed the same doctrine, when he said, from his own experience: "When I am weak, then am I strong." Whatever else the church forgets, this one thing she must remember, that God will be known in Zion as her salvation. The moment she begins to feel self-sufficient and self-complacent, that moment her life is departing, and her beauty and her strength are dying at the root. We must acknowledge that we belong wholly to God. We are not our own, but are bought with a price, even the precious blood of the Son of God, who gave himself for us, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us and rose again.

Digitized by Google

How little is this thought of; and by many, too, who are the professed followers of Jesus Christ, whose life was a living example of consecration to God. The church is but partially awake *to the responsibility of her stewardship.* Her energies have not yet been put in requisition. What an immense amount of property in her hands, which should be converted into the means of salvation to millions of souls, in all the guilt and darkness of sin, is laid up to rust! What treasures are wasted on the needless gratification of appetite, pride, fashion, vain amusements, luxury, and worldly ambition; and how much thereby of time, thought, feeling, health, and peace of mind are sacrificed, while God has been robbed, and the Saviour wounded in the house of his friends! All these talents must be reclaimed, and laid down at the foot of the cross.

The best interests of religion, and the highest welfare of the church, are connected with a strong attachment to the doctrines and institutions of the gospel. Nothing, will more surely keep alive the spirit of piety, and prevent the removal of the Lord's heritage from a people, than such a cherished regard. Some Christians are entertaining high hopes of a better day as near at hand. It may be so. Nor would we discourage such expectations; but only say, if the *past* is any criterion to judge of the future, their expectations can only be realized by an increased attachment to the institutions and doctrines of the gospel, by which the purity, benevolence, energy, and life of the church are sustained.

We greatly mistake the day in which we live, and the signs of the times, if the removing of old landmarks, the want of spirituality in many of the churches, a speculating philosophy in religion, and restless skepticism, do not demand of us a more attentive study of the doctrines of the Bible, that we may stand up firm in the name of the Lord, and be valiant for the truth. So may we be enabled to wrest new territory from the enemy, extend the boundaries of the Redeemer's kingdom, and hail the wider victories of the cross.

We will add but one thought more; we must cherish revivals. They are the gift of our Heavenly Father, to be sought and asked for. In the best sense of the term, a revival is the spirit of Christ, of apostles, of martyrs, glowing with love for the salvation of souls and the glory of God. And if ever there were

Digitized by Google

churches that had reason to cherish the spirit of revivals, and to labor and pray for their promotion, they are the churches planted by our fathers. It is the baptism of their infancy, and they have grown up under their influence. Accessions have mostly come by means of these seasons of refreshing from the Lord; and only here and there is seen a sinner returning from the error of his ways, when no breath is moving on the valley of the slain. Our churches love revivals; but they must love and prize them more. In them, is the blessing of the Highest, and the fruit of redemption, sealed by the blood of the Saviour. In pure revivals, is the strength of the church, the hope of our country, and the salvation of the world.

Thus, we have spoken of things we must not do, and things we must do, if our religious blessings and our privileges are to be perpetuated. Our responsibility is great. With the Bible in our hands, with the book of God's providential dealings toward his people open for our perusal, with the past and the present brought under our eye, we are not in want of light for the understanding of our duty, or of motives for its faithful performance. We are warned in distinct and solemn accents, to bring forth the fruits of the kingdom in their season, righteousness, faith, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost, *and all is well.* Shall we not take counsel from infinite wisdom, and profit by the facts we have been gathering from the past? Like causes will produce like results. The want of spirituality, conformity to the world, the putting of human wisdom in the place of the doctrines of the gospel, self-confidence, divisions and animosities, and a religion of lifeless forms, have blotted out of existence many a once flourishing church, and left others with only a name to live. Are we in no danger? Can we stand where they have fallen? Has sin changed its nature; or God adopted any new principle into his moral government? If not, we are only safe in the path of duty. Here, nothing can harm us, for the protecting arm of God's everlasting covenant is around his obedient people, as their ample defence. Let Zion awake, put on strength, and be clothed with her beautiful garments, and she shall ride upon the high places of earth. "And the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High."

Digitized by Google

SCIENTIFIC MEETING AT CAMBRIDGE.

It is a cheering indication for our country, that men of science are prosecuting their appropriate work with as much ability as enthusiasm. Our circumstances, and perhaps our national temperament, incline us to be a people of action, rather than of reflection and investigation. But the history of the Smithsonian Institute; the high character of Silliman's Journal; the reputation of the Cambridge observatory, and the recent endowment of the Scientific School in that place; the successful career of the observatories at Washington and Cincinnati; the cordial welcome, full appreciation, and ready adoption of learned foreigners, who have come to cast in their lot with us, and who have greatly contributed to our scientific progress; and many similar manifestations, are among the signs which give assurance that the nation is not to be swallowed up in a vortex of mere utilitarian knowledge, nor devoted entirely to the prosecution of gain.

The scientific meeting recently held in Cambridge, is to be regarded with lively interest, as giving proof of the progress of science; and as promising that man is going to possess and control our broad territory, its vast mineral treasures, and its varied resources, for the advancement of all the political and social interests of our country and our race.

These gentlemen have traversed a wide range of subjects, and discussed them with great ability. As religious observers, we have felt no small degree of interest in their deliberations and deliverances. "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." And truly these men have pleasure in them. They have found the varied and rich delight which rewards patient and skilful observers of the handiworks of Him, who "is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

It is a healthful taste, that enjoys the beauty, grandeur, order, and power which his works exhibit. The intelligent love of nature is necessary to the highest development of the human soul. What God has condescended to make, man may well study. All this universe is a teacher. It is full of angel-voices, uttering to the soul of man lessons of wisdom. Nor are we reluctant to avow that the gratification of a slight degree of national pride has mingled with other feelings, in beholding our countrymen taking

Digitized by Google

such a position as, a few years ago, would have been pronounced, in some quarters, unattainable. If, as the Convention seemed to think, Kirkwood's discovery of the formula for the axis-rotation of the heavenly bodies, is well established, we know not why he will not as a discoverer, rank with Kepler. We are happy, too, to recognise in their labors, the impulse of a genuine and enlightened philanthropy. They see that the wants of society demand a growing mastery of mind over matter; and that such mastery begins in knowledge.

The day has forever past, when, on the one hand, Galileo need dread a bench of monkish inquisitors; and when, on the other, the devout believer in Christ need fear the investigations of science and their results. Nay, as for ourselves, we rather confess to a degree of impatience, that would hasten these investigations to their solid and permanent conclusions, so far as they affect the question of the infallibility of the Bible. We have confidence, that whatever is written on the deeply-buried monumental rocks of primeval periods, as well as what the comparatively recent inscriptions on the walls and columns of Egypt, and of Nineveh may declare, will be found to sustain and commend the records of Moses and the prophets. We are equally confident, that as true science advances, scepticism and sneering infidelity will disappear. Irreligious men, indeed, may still prosecute the sciences, and that too in a spirit of hostility to revelation; but we have passed the period when such men can exalt themselves in the public esteem, by tearing away these foundations of society, and these pledges of Divine love to our afflicted humanity. Nor are such men now goaded to acts of hostility by the jealousy of the church; since zeal for the Scriptures no longer involves such jealousy. Religion and science are, therefore, moving on, side by side, to the same great end of elevating man to the high places of excellence and happiness, for which he was at first created.

All the proceedings of this convention are marked with that urbanity and mutual respect that become a congress of well-bred men, met for any purpose. Nor, even when the heat-enkindling topic of the glaciers was introduced, could it elicit any thing warmer than a few electric sparks. To us, who are uninitiated, the remarks of Professor Hall in the conclusion of that debate, appeared peculiarly just and well-timed, although they must have been rather reproving to some of the anti-glacial theorists. He

Digitized by Google

remarked, that "We ought to be ashamed in this country, to speak with confidence, after so little research, when there had been so much, abroad. He considered the evidence conclusive, that the phenomena of the Alps could only have arisen from the action of ice."

The true state of the case in this controversy, may perhaps be, that Professors Agassiz and Guyot have applied the principles which they have established, on the most careful and skilful examination of the Alps, to regions of the earth which they have not so examined, and where other causes have been at work. As to their conclusions regarding the Alps, it must be strong testimony that can overthrow the opinions of two such men, who have spent the summers of ten years in examining, in a scientific manner, the nature and action of the glaciers. During those ten years, three thousand points have been barometrically observed.

We take it to be indicative of the tendencies of modern science, that an address like that of Professor Agassiz on animal morphology, or, as we should say, on natural theology, was so delivered, and so received; for it is the only one which we have noticed as being received with open marks of approbation. It was an oral communication on animal morphology, which may be interpreted, the science of the forms of animals, and of their changes. He has made a new and brilliant addition to the great argument of Derham, Ray, and Paley, for establishing the doctrines of natural theology.

He introduced his statement by describing the objects of the investigations of zoologists up to the present time; which have been, to discover the various relations of animals, whether structural, physiological, or geological. But the results of these investigations have led only to classifications and theories. "I think," he says, "there is a higher aim in science than mere classification, than mere theory, however wide may be the conclusions derived from those investigations. It is my opinion that we are to seek the recognition of the plan according to which animals have been created; to inquire whether there is really in nature a plan, which does not result merely from our contrivances to illustrate the subject before us, but which is inherent in nature; in a word, which is a Thought of the Supreme Intelligence, manifested in material reality. That is the view I take of the animal kingdom, a view which greatly differs from that generally adopted."

Digitized by Google

The question he discusses, is thus stated; "Do the relations which exist in nature, shew satisfactorily that all classes of animals, and all individual animals are partial expressions of a general thought, and manifestations of immaterial reality, of a plan laid out by a Supreme Intelligence?"

To establish the affirmative of this question, he presents two considerations,— first, the various types of animals are not evolved from one another; yet, secondly, they are the consecutive stages in one plan. All animals, therefore, are separated into classes which can have no common material origin; yet they belong to one plan, and point to a common issue of their series.

It is manifest, that, if facts substantiate these positions, a new and glorious demonstration of an intelligent First Cause is added to the former instructions of natural theology. Without the aid of diagrams, we cannot well present the learned professor's illustrations. After shewing that there are four types of animal existence, inseparably distinct, Radiata, Mollusca, Articulata and Vertebrata, he approaches his conclusion by asking, "Whether there is an intellectual connection between these types thus materially separate and incommunicable, shewing that they are the connection of a preconceived, and hence intelligent and intended plan, laid out before their creation, and carried out in reality, in a succession of types? If I succeed in shewing that there is such an intelligent connection between these plans, then, I think, I shall have shewn, on scientific grounds alone, that we are to bow before a Supreme Intelligence, and acknowledge in science, what we so deeply feel in our bosoms."

His argument is thus beautifully and impressively closed. "In the succession of organized beings, we find such a progress, that tracing all these relations, we arrive at man at the last. He is, by his structure, the highest. He is, in the order of succession, the last. And as we have traced all these different connections with reference to the plan laid out at the beginning, at what conclusion do we arrive in the most direct manner? It is, that the creation of man was the aim of the plan from the beginning. And in a higher view, and without any reference to utilitarian considerations, we may say that this world has been made for man; for man was the object which the Creator had in view, when he framed the plan for the development of this globe. And if this be the case, let us never forget what a responsibility it throws upon us,

Digitized by Google

to be the object of such a development, and the close of such a magnificent construction as that which we have before our eyes every day; and let that be the fullest evidence that man was created in the image of his God."

We cordially welcome such coadjutors, laboring in their own peculiar sphere. The man of science must deal in demonstration. He convinces, he impresses, no further than he makes men see with their own eyes. The teacher of Christ's gospel stands on different ground. He deals in authority; not human, but divine; not to enforce what he believes, but what God asserts; not to wait for assent, but to insist on the declarations of God as worthy of unhesitating belief. Hence the two must labor in different spheres, and in different manners. But their labors are consentaneous; and, conducted in the right spirit, the teachings of science will greatly aid the teachings of religion.

IMPUTATION.

By this term the old divines meant to express a fact of great prominence and importance in the system of redemption. It is a term which has called forth much opposition. But, unfortunately, from exaggerated statement on the one side, and misapprehension on the other, the lines of separation and antagonism are not rightly drawn.

In regard to Christ's righteousness, the essential revealed fact is, that he acted and suffered under such an arrangement, that he invests each believer in him with all the benefits which righteously, and by agreement with his Father, can accrue from his actions and sufferings. This is the essential fact. It admits of indefinite speculation and explanation as to its mode. One says, Christ represents us before the law, and before the mercy of the Godhead. Another says, Christ paid our debt. One confines his substitutional acts and sufferings to the elect; another regards them as available for all men. One sets down both his obedience and his sufferings to the account of the elect; another confines the atonement to his sufferings. These persons all use the phrase, "the imputed righteousness of Christ," without any impropriety, though they use it in different senses.

Digitized by Google

Without entering upon the points unsettled among evangelical believers, we would present a practical view, of vital importance to their comfort and growth. It might, perhaps, be called Identification, rather than Imputation. The exhibition of it pervades the later discourses of our Lord, and the writings of his apostles.

When he says, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches," he presents it by a figure. So when he is called the Head, and his church the Body; a vital and permanent union is described by a strong figure. Those expressions do not necessarily involve a declaration of any thing more than a temporary intimacy and dependence. As a father may properly call himself the head of his family, without meaning to express more than a relation of dependence and support, temporary in its duration, and limited in its nature. But when the whole breadth of scriptural instruction on this point is examined, it will shew that the word Imputation, in its strongest sense, is too feeble to declare the whole truth.

The mystery begins in the Incarnation, of which the Scriptures speak in these strong phrases; "The word became flesh;" "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." "Son of man" is thenceforward to be one title of the Son of God. He has now entered the rank of humanity, not to lose or to degrade his divine nature; not to occupy permanently a grade as low as that of any, even the highest of our race; but to be identified with us all in a most peculiar sense; and with his church, and individual believers, in a still more intimate way. The great fact to which we refer, may, perhaps, be thus stated; Christ is not only one of our race in the possession of a true humanity, but he is so identified with us, that all his qualities, possessions, acts, and sufferings are representative and generic, as well as personal and specific. To the world at large they are so, as available or possible benefits. To the church as a body, they are so to the full extent of investing her with power, permanence, purity, and life as eternal as that of her Lord. To the individual believer they are so, to the fullest extent of his necessities, his unworthiness, and his weakness.

One striking specimen of his identification with our race is seen in the quotation of the eighth Psalm, by Paul, in his epistle to the Hebrews. No one can question, as he reads the Psalm, whether it refers to man, to the race of man, as being a little lower than the angels, and having dominion over the beasts. But

Digitized by Google

in the New Testament, it is referred to Jesus without explanation, or any indication of a change in its application. "He was made under the law," not for his own sake, but for man's sake. "He was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree." In him the race is so represented, that for his sake it has been spared from the avenging stroke of justice for thousands of years. In him every blessing comes to man. If the race were not viewed in reference to his person, mediation, and sacrifice, there could be no token of favor from a righteous God, no proposal of pardon and reconciliation. Now this may be called Imputation; or any other term that may be considered preferable; or no name, nor even any attention, be given to it; but it remains a most prominent fact in regard to man, that Christ is in a wonderful manner so identified with our race, as to secure to us all temporal blessings, and the offer of all spiritual and eternal good.

But it is his union with the believer, that brings most fully to view this wonderful identification. We call it Identification, not that we would bring in this term permanently to express this truth, for it does so very imperfectly. But it comes nearer to the glorious reality, as we suppose, than Imputation or Representation does.

The union which we have with the Son of God is such, that all we have, of which we would be divested, and from which we would be delivered, he assumes; and all to which we are exposed, is transferred to him. It is such, too, that all he has, which can in any way avail for us, is ours. Have we guilt and its consequent curse? "He is made sin for us;" He is "made a curse for us." Are we doomed to death? He dies in our stead. Is the cup of wrath mingled for us? He drinks it. Has the law a fiery and deadly shaft uplifted against our hearts? He stands before us, and catches it in his own naked breast. Are we reproached? He counts himself reproached. Are we injured, neglected, loved, or treated with kindness? It is all done to him; and in the great day of judgment, he will fully set forth this identification of himself with his people. So, on the other hand; "All things are yours." Ye have received the bread of life, and it avails for your nourishment and eternal good. "He is head over all things to his church." "Because I live, ye shall live also." "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Such are the more general forms in which this fact is set forth.

Digitized by Google

The more particular statements are of this character. If you look to his glorious attributes, they are all the believers', to the fullest extent to which they can avail themselves of them. As examples. His power is theirs, so that they can say: "I will love thee, O Lord, *my* strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress." His wisdom is theirs; it is exercised as really and as fully for them, as if it were their own. His dominion is theirs. "He is Head over all things to the Church;" not for his own glory alone, but also to his Church. Hence he says, that they shall sit on thrones with him in his kingdom. He stands so related to the Holy Spirit, that he can send forth that blessed agent and author of sanctification and consolation. But that power is so given to his people, that they can receive it in fullest measures, according to their necessities. Nay, his very life itself is theirs, as implied in the declaration, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "He is our life." Now all this is something infinitely beyond the relation of a father to a child, or any other human relation. It is more, even, than the relation of Creator to creature. Imputation, or representation, seems hardly strong enough to express it. It includes them and much more.

The Son of God became the Son of man. But there was more in it, than merely incarnation. "He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh;" He "took on him the seed of Abraham." But there were more peculiarities in that mystery than its miraculous mode, its mysterious blending the human and divine; more than the separation of that man from all others by the elevation of an immaculate nature. There was also such an entering into our condition, such an identification of himself with man, that his sacrifice is as if we had been sacrificed. We can offer it as our own to the justice of God, to the law, to conscience, to the great accuser. All that merit of obedience, of unsullied purity of heart and life, of unreserved consecration to the Father's glory; all that agonizing and ignominious death is ours, to offer as the ground of our forgiveness. Jesus is "thus the Lord our righteousness."

So too when we pray in faith, it is as though he prayed; and when he prays, it is as though we prayed. Such are the wonderful representations of the Scripture on this subject. We, too, are said to have died with him, to be crucified and buried with

Digitized by Google

him; and to have risen with him. His resurrection was not merely personal, it was also official and representative. In his resurrection, we rose. In his triumph over death, and sin, and Satan, we triumphed. His being in heaven is virtually as our being there.

If there be any objection to the theological terms Imputation, Transfer, and Federal Representation, it is not, that they are too strong, but too feeble. They do not embrace all the fulness of Scripture teaching conveyed by the expression, "IN Christ." As in these examples: "there is no condemnation to them that are *in* Christ Jesus;" "accepted *in* the beloved;" "of him are ye *in* Christ Jesus;" "to the saints and faithful brethren *in* Christ;" "Christ *in* you;" "the dead *in* Christ shall rise first." The terms Transfer, Imputation, and Representation ascribe the appropriation of Christ's merits and mediation to us who believe; but they separate his person and his attributes too far from us, and leave us at last out of Christ, and not "in Christ."

The term we have employed, being liable to perversion and misapprehension, it is not to be recommended very decidedly. And yet we suppose that, in the range of human observation, there is no exhibition of identification, so full and varied and glorious as this. Believers are feeble just here. On this point, so contrary to all the deductions of natural reason, to all the teachings of philosophy, and to many forms of our wicked disposition, there should be "line upon line, and precept upon precept." To understand fully the Scripture doctrine on this subject, to believe and accept it with an affectionate heart, every day and every hour, will make a strong, happy, holy, useful Christian. To be weak, and uncertain, and negligent there, is to keep the branch from a full and vital connection with the parent tree. "Christ is all in all." To know him, is life eternal. A large portion of the church appears yet to be in what the old divines used to call "a legal state," in opposition to the exercise of a full, evangelical faith. Or as has been quaintly said: Christians are lingering in the seventh chapter of Romans, and seem reluctant to pass over into the eighth, in their own experience. The bridge to cross this gulf, is faith that gives up to Christ our sins, our sorrows, our guilt, our weakness, our evil hearts, our enemies, and our fears; and takes in their stead, him and his sacrifice, his righteousness and power, his mediation and his victories.

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

THE WORKS OF LEONARD WOODS, D. D. — The first volume, to be followed by four others, has just appeared, beautifully printed in the best style of the celebrated Andover press. We rejoice to receive the first instalment of this important publication, which will at once take the place of a standard work in theology, exerting great influence at home and abroad. Ministers must have it, of course; and very numerous laymen who take delight in such studies, will also possess it. The characteristics of Dr. Woods's theology are, decided orthodoxy, carefully stated so as to forestall each conceivable objection, and then sustained with reliable arguments. His lectures acquired this character from the circumstances under which they were delivered. They used to be thoroughly debated in his classes, where, surrounded by twenty or thirty educated young men, keen-eyed and inquisitive, some aspiring to the triumph of catching the Doctor in a contradiction, or detecting a broken link in his reasoning,— and others more nobly ambitious to make sure of the whole truth, and nothing else,— the wary professor had to guard his positions with the greatest care. The course of lectures, thus sharply scrutinized by thirty or forty successive classes, must, at last, have been very completely sifted out, and there is little likelihood that any important defect will be detected in what is now given to the world. These lectures will also have their historical value, "shewing hereafter," as the venerable author says, "what was the theology taught and maintained in the Andover seminary for the first thirty-eight years after its establishment, under the eye of the Founders while they lived, and in conformity with the creed by them appointed, and under the eye of the Visitors and Trustees, during the time of his continuance in office, and with their approbation."

It is to be hoped, that the author may long be spared to defend his positions if any should assail them. Or rather, may he dwell peaceful within his massive walls, secure from the spoiler.

> "Calm may he sit beneath the wide-spread tree
> Of his old age,"

enjoying life's serenest evening-sky, and the repose of soul which belongs to him whose allotted task is nobly done.

SHAKSPEARE. — The flood of modern literature cannot undermine the ancient monuments of the human mind. The great English dramatist still holds his unrivalled eminence as the portrait-painter of all sorts of human natures. The press is as busy with him as ever. Phillips, Sampson, and Company are publishing an edition, with introductions and valuable notes, executed in the highest style of typographic art. It will beautifully fill the place on every book-shelf, where a copy of Shakspeare should stand. Though his vanquished rival, Ben Jonson, so long the literary dictator of his time, was an old offender in the same line, he has judiciously pointed out the blemishes that mar the pages of the bard of Avon. "I remember," he says,

Digitized by Google

"the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakspeare, that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, Would that he had blotted out a thousand! Which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted; and to justify mine own candor: for I loved the man, and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent fantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped." It may be doubted whether "old Ben Jonson" would have made the best brakeman to regulate the velocity of the Shakspearean train. It is natural to wish that the indelicacies which pollute the pages of the dramatist could be forever expunged; yet he was purity itself, compared with most of his contemporaries, or even as contrasted with the grossness of the "yellow-paper literature," which disgraces this present age of boasted improvement and refinement. Singular as the fact may seem, despite his condescensions to the vulgar taste, the ethics of Shakspeare are of an elevated stamp. A British missionary at Benares reports, that there is an English college there, supported by the East India Company, from which all Christian books are carefully excluded. And yet one of the pupils boasted to him, that he had learned the doctrine of the atonement, and other prominent teachings of the gospel, out of the plays of Shakspeare. The theatre-going people affect to lament, that the "legitimate dramas" of their great master cannot keep their place upon the stage. The reason is obvious; — they are too exalted to suit the fancy of the "pit and galleries;" and if they were not, they are far more adapted to be read than enacted. Alas, that they are not adapted to be read in the family circle!

HUME'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND. — A new edition of this standard work, issued by Phillips, Sampson, and Company, seems to be called forth by the recent publication, by the same firm, of a neat edition of Macaulay, uniform with this of Hume. This is rather a singular relation of the two histories; for though Macaulay continues the history of England from the point where Hume leaves off, the latter is a stiff tory and infidel, while the other is a staunch whig and state-church Christian. They have nothing in common, but their eloquence; and this is of a different character in the two. It is certainly noticeable, that the popularity of Hume should still continue, notwithstanding the great change of public sentiment as to the character of political parties in England during the seventeenth century. On the restoration of the Stuarts, in 1660, it became impossible to tell the truth about the Puritans. If any historian had attempted it, it would have been no better than thrusting his neck into a halter. Cringing court-writers flattering for a pension, and insolent cavaliers railing for revenge, had the telling of the story of Cromwell and the Puritans. And when the final expulsion of the Stuarts, in 1688, might have allowed the truth to speak freely once more, nearly all who had known and revered the heroes of the Commonwealth were dead; and

Digitized by Google

new political excitements of the most intense character long absorbed the public attention. Thus the fame of the Puritans continued to be dimmed by the clouds of prejudice and calumny; till now, within a very few years, those mists have been swept away by the strong btreah of liberal inquiry; and the reputation of Cromwell and his fellows shines all the brighter for that unrighteous obscuration.

On the whole, it is somewhat surprising that Hume, with his blind and bitter antipathy to Puritanism, — the "highest style" of that Christianity he hated, — should have accorded to it the exalted merits he has mingled with his ridicule; and that he should acknowledge that "the precious spark of liberty had been kindled by the Puritans alone," and that it is to them that "the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution." It is easy to see why he jeers at them as sour and precise. He once remarked, "that he never knew a devout man, who was not a gloomy man." On hearing of this saying, good bishop Horne observed, "that Mr. Hume doubtless stated his own experience correctly; for it was enough, at any time, to make a devout man feel gloomy, to fall into the company of such a blasphemer."

THE BUCKMINSTERS. — Joseph Buckminster, D. D., was a sound and orthodox divine, a right holy man, who was pastor of the church in Portsmouth, N. H., where he died in 1812. Joseph Stevens Buckminster, his son, was a young minister of the rarest and most engaging qualities; but who was far gone in defection from the pure faith of his fathers. He died also in 1812, one day before his father. Their memoirs have recently been published by one of the family, Mrs. Lee, whose sympathies are altogether with her brother Joseph, rather than with her father, the Doctor. It appears that the heart of the pious father was well-nigh broken by the preferences of his darling son for Unitarianism, and that he earnestly dissuaded the wayward and talented youth from entering the ministry with the views he held. And when he, with sad misgiving, preached at the ordination of his son, over the Brattle Street Church in Boston, in 1805, he did not fail to remind that son, that "he had presented him at the baptismal font, and washed him in the name of the sacred Trinity."

This ordination took place at the time when Unitarianism was working in concealment, at Boston and Cambridge, sowing its tares while men slept. This course, so contrary to the frankness and sincerity of Christianity, so opposite to the boldness and integrity of apostles and martyrs, is a deep and lasting stigma upon the early reputation of American Unitarianism. The charge, indeed, is repelled with great acrimony by the apologists for Unitarianism; but it is amply substantiated by the testimony of their own writers. Nay, sometimes the charge is proved in the very publication that repudiates it with indignation. Thus the last Christian Examiner, in a review of the Memoirs of the Buckministers, speaks of this dishonorable charge, of intentional concealment of religious opinions on the part of the earlier Unitarian clergymen, as a "railing accusation," destitute of justice and decency. And yet, in a postcript to that review, from the pen of the celebrated Unitarian champion, Mr. Andrews Norton, he fully substantiates that same railing accusation.

Digitized by Google

Speaking of the controversy excited by that outrage against honesty and justice, the election of Dr. Ware to the Hollis professorship of divinity, in 1805, Mr. Norton says, that "the controversy which followed was not managed with extraordinary ability by the liberal party. Through the influence of many causes which rendered the fact natural and excusable, members of that party *were not sufficiently explicit in the avowal of their opinions;* there was a tendency among them to represent themselves as not essentially disagreeing with their opponents." To shew that he is not talking at random, this Mr. Norton says: "The prestige of Orthodoxy continued very powerful, and there were many whose own opinions would have borne no severe test, who yet shrunk from any direct opposition to it. I cannot fix the precise date, but it was after 1805, that I was informed by a young minister, that, on his professing his disbelief of the Trinity, he was told by one of the most distinguished clergymen of Boston, and a most liberal-minded man, that he had better not publicly avow it." In 1812, Mr. Norton commenced the publication of the General Repository, in which he openly assailed the doctrines of Orthodoxy. He says: "The publication of the Repository soon failed for want of support. It was too bold for the proper prudence, or the worldly caution, or for the actual convictions, of a large portion of the liberal party." When, the next year, a recommendation of it was published, it bore only the names of laymen. "It was not thought advisable that any clergyman should sign it."

After this, it would seem useless for Unitarians to attempt to absolve the patriarchs of their sect from the ignominy attached to a want of moral courage, and to an excess of duplicity, in the early propagation of their doctrines. Let this conduct be palliated and extenuated to the utmost possible extent; and it will still remain a deep stain upon their names and memories.

THE SECOND CHURCH IN BOSTON. — The splendid edifice so lately erected for this ancient congregation, once sound and strong in the faith, has, through the decay of that society, been sold for debt. It has been purchased by the Methodists, who occupy it for their worship. The decay of the original church is, doubtless, to be ascribed to its sad spiritual declension from the faith of the Puritan founders, both as to form and spirit. Is not this result a practical repetition and accomplishment of our Saviour's words? — "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." May the present occupants of that costly temple ever remember the lesson to be learned from the fate of their predecessors, lest the Lord should yet again "let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons."

ANDOVER SEMINARY. — The warmest friends of this noble institution could scarce ask for any thing beyond what was afforded them, at its recent anniversary. Criticism was well nigh cheated out of its chance to complain; and had little to find fault with, but the want of faults. The orthodoxy and oratory were quite unexceptionable; and

Digitized by Google

the efforts of the speakers gave promise that they would be able ministers of the New Testament. Occasional visiters to such a scene cannot but be deeply impressed with the importance of cherishing ardent piety among those who are pursuing their studies with a view to the ministry of reconciliation. Without this fervency of spirit, all that they acquire may prove a curse, rather than a blessing, to themselves and to the church of God. There is much force in the caution given by Mr. Bayne to Dr. Ames, when that much-suffering Puritan was flying into Holland: "Beware of a strong brain and a cold heart!" Such ill-omened conjunctions forebode nothing but disaster. There is need of the most diligent use of the means for stirring up the fading coals of religious affection; for men's hearts, "by nature cold in goodness, will burn no longer than they are blown."

MEETING OF THE AMERICAN BOARD. — The lovely village of Pittsfield, which, as a well-watered garden of the Lord, shews even more of moral beauty than of natural, has been the seat of one of the most delightful convocations that the people of God have known for many years. This is the more worthy to be noticed, because there was an expectation abroad, that the occasion would be disturbed by strong debates on "agitating questions." Very many stayed away, under the influence of this apprehension. But the clouds, which from afar looked so dark and threatening, were all at once dispersed; and the Sun of righteousness shone forth with mellowing fervor, and with healing beams. It was wonderful to see the heavens, which had so long been gathering blackness, become so calm and clear. We cannot explain the happy change on any supposition, except that it was in answer to prayer. We believe it to be the conviction of the multitudes who took sweet counsel together over the cause of missions, that they had never witnessed a more delightful meeting of the Board.

ORDINATIONS.

Aug. 15. Mr. Garland, Bethel, Me.
Sep. 5. Mr. Solomon P. Fay, Hampton, N. H.
" " Mr. C. M. Cordley, Hopkinton, N. H.

INSTALLATIONS.

Aug. 16. Rev. J. C. Thacher, Middleboro, Four Corners, Mass.
" 22. Rev. John Storrs, Winchendon, Mass.
" " Rev. Chauncey Goodrich, Watertown, Con.
" 28. Rev. Wm. T. Savage, Franklin, N. H.
Sept. 7. Rev. Alfred E. Ives, Deerfield, Mass.

DEATH OF MINISTER.

Aug. 29. Rev. Ethan Smith, Boylston, Mass., æ. 86.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill*, *Boston*.

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] NOVEMBER, 1849. [No. 11.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

Digitized by Google

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Intellectual Independence in the Preacher,	493
Try the Spirits,	504
Progress,	508
Sanctification by the Cross,	515
Review:	
Lives of the Chief Fathers of New England,	516
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Schleiermacher,	535
The Praising of Books,	536
Southey's Common-Place Book,	537
French Revolution of 1848,	538
Windings of the River of the Water of Life,	538
Pastoral Reminiscenses,	539
Ecclesiastical Lists,	540

NOTICE.

The Publishers of the Christian Observatory, being so situated that they cannot give their personal attention to the circulation, and other pecuniary interests of the work, are desirous to dispose of their property in it to some competent and suitable person. Any such person, inclined to undertake its publication, is requested to make application to JOHN V. BEANE & CO.,

21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Clergymen will be supplied with the work at one half the subscription price, or one dollar per annum.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,

No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

1868 Sept. 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. III. NOVEMBER, 1849. No. 11.

INTELLECTUAL INDEPENDENCE IN THE PREACHER.

THE biographer of Toplady, that eminent and devoted minister in the English Established Church, remarks of his habits as a preacher: "Whether he preached *extempore*, or from notes, his sermons were always the fruit of his own labor. He scorned to soar on borrowed feathers. He knew that 'the Lord was against the prophet that stole his words every one from his neighbor.'" He then gives an anecdote, which takes us behind the English pulpit, and discloses certain humiliating habits of the English clergy. Toplady, on one occasion, had purchased of a London tradesman some books. "After that business was over," he says, "Mr. Osborne took me to the farthest end of his long shop, and in a low voice said thus: 'Sir, you will soon be ordained. I suppose you have not laid in a very great stock of sermons. I can supply you with as many sets as you please; all originals; very excellent ones; and they will come for a trifle.' My answer was: 'I certainly shall never be a customer to you in that way; for I am of opinion, that the man who cannot, or will not, make his own sermons, is quite unfit to wear the gown. How could you think of my buying *ready-made sermons?*' His answer shocked me: 'Nay, young gentleman; do not be surprised at my offering you ready-made sermons; for I assure you, I have sold ready-made sermons to many a bishop, in my time!' 'Good Mr. Osborne,' replied Toplady, 'if you have any concern for the credit of the Church of England, never tell this news to any body else, from henceforward for ever.'"

In his collection of "Incidents, Anecdotes, etc.," Toplady gives another case. "Mr. Heard very lately heard Dr. M——

Digitized by Google

preach. Afterwards, the Doctor asked him how he liked his sermon. 'Like it?' said Mr. Heard; 'why, sir, I have liked and admired it these twenty years!' The Doctor stared. 'Upon that shelf,' added Mr. Heard, 'you will find it, verbatim. Mr. Boehm was an excellent preacher.'" Toplady adds: "My friend Heard is a bookseller; and booksellers are sometimes dangerous hearers, when a preacher deals in borrowed sermons."

It has been related of Dr. South, that he once attended church where he heard one of his own sermons preached, by a clergyman who was a stranger to him. After sermon was closed, he joined company with the preacher, and inquired of him, how long time it took him to prepare that sermon. The preacher replied, "somewhere about two days." "Well, sir," said South, "that sermon cost ME the labor of a whole week!"

An attendant upon divine service in one of the English Churches, who, it would seem, was well read in sermons of standard preachers, perceived that the preacher was delivering a discourse made up of uncredited passages from different preachers. At length, on hearing a certain passage, he said, in an audible and forcible whisper, "That is from South." Hearing another, he said, "That is from Tillotson;" and thus he also asserted the theft of other passages, as they occurred in delivery. The preacher, disconcerted by such betrayments of his plagiarisms, having a mind to stop the knowing and troublesome hearer "by authority," finally said to him: "Fellow, if you do not cease your disturbance of the services, I will order the sexton to take you in charge." "That," replied the hearer, with imperturbable and provoking gravity, "*that is* HIS OWN!"

Addison, in one of his numbers of the Spectator, introduces his friend Sir Roger de Coverly, as describing his chaplain, a good-natured and sociable man, who had been with him thirty years; to whom, says he, "on his first settling with me, I made a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English; and only begged him that, every Sunday, he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit." "Accordingly," says Sir Roger, "he has digested them into such a series that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity." While Sir Roger is giving this account, up comes the parson himself; and on inquiry of him who is to preach to-morrow, he very naively replies: "The bishop of St. Asaph in the morning,

Digitized by Google

and Dr. South in the afternoon." Addison closes the paragraph with this remark, which is sufficiently caustic as well as graphic: "A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor." In another paper, manifestly with reference to this same indolent and dishonest practice, he introduces a correspondent as complaining of a young preacher, who, in the delivery, barbarously murdered a sermon of Tillotson on evil speaking.

In presumptive proof of the commonness of the habit of preaching other men's sermons, in the English Established Church, may be mentioned the fact, that on the covers of the London Christian Observer, which came to this country several years since, appeared a bookseller's advertisement of sermons engraved to resemble manuscript, for pulpit use. That such a practice should be attested, as notorious and common, by an advertisement upon the covers of the most evangelical periodical, at that time, in the Church of England, speaks a condition of things in the English pulpit which is exceedingly strange. It would be quite easy to conceive of very embarrassing occurrences among English clergymen furnished with sets of engraved sermons from the same bookseller's shop, and preaching by exchange, in each other's pulpits. If their audiences have such habits of attentive hearing of sermons as exist in our New England congregations, it would seem that the clerical character for intellectual independence and for literary honesty, must be at a "heavy discount" among them.

It is believed that the standard of clerical morals, on this subject, in our own country, is better than appears abroad. A New England minister cannot *once* do such an act as to preach another minister's sermon, without forfeiting his character, in the eyes of good men; and coming to a speedy end of his influence as a preacher, if not to the end of his ministry among a people. Such instances, however, have occurred; and other forms of pulpit plagiarism not quite so bald and palpable, demand that the voice of earnest and solemn protestation be lifted against it.

It was a notorious fact, in relation to some of the evangelists of the Finney school, so popular a few years since, that they preached, though in an unwritten form, and as if extemporaneously, the substance of many of the discourses of their leader. The President of one of our New England Colleges relates, that,

Digitized by Google

after having heard Mr. Finney preach several sermons in New York city, he attended upon the preaching of a certain notorious evangelist, who was "conducting a protracted meeting" in the vicinity of his college. He stated that so closely did the evangelist recite several of the sermons of Finney, that while listening to one sentence, he could often anticipate the next; and could foretell also what illustrations he would use of a given remark or topic, from having heard the same illustration of the same idea by Mr. Finney. Rev. Dr. Nettleton, several years since, preached, in some southern pulpit, one of his own sermons, which he had once loaned for perusal; and after the close of his service was informed, to his surprise, that a preacher who had preceded him but a short time before in the same pulpit, had preached the same sermon. At another time, while in a southern city, and attending an evening service, Dr. Nettleton heard one of his own sermons delivered from the pulpit by a stranger. A New England preacher, several years since, going to occupy, for a few Sabbaths, a pulpit in the city of New York, on the day of his arrival in the city, was visited by a young preacher who had preceded him in the same pulpit, (and to whom he had, a few weeks before, loaned one of his sermons for perusal,) and was earnestly requested not to preach that particular sermon.. The young preacher frankly acknowledged that he had made such a use of the sermon, in preaching there himself, as would subject him to great mortification, if the discourse to which he had been indebted should be delivered by its real author. Another of the most powerful preachers in our country, recently deceased, has stated that he once heard one of his own discourses preached, by a minister, not probably aware of his presence, in an evening congregation. At a meeting of a body of ministers and messengers of the churches, in one of our New England districts, several years since, a preacher, — called upon to officiate in the absence of the one appointed, — delivered, as a sermon, the substance of an article which had been published in a religious magazine; and which, in his absence, had once been read by one of his brethren, before the very association to which he belonged, for the purposes of criticism and revision. The publication of volumes of sermons, selected from among the manuscripts of deceased clergymen, in New England, has, in two instances, altogether surprising, disclosed the fact of their use of the published writings of other

Digitized by Google

preachers; in series of sentences, and in one instance, — ascertained subsequently by the compiler of the volume, to his great mortification, — of the whole, or nearly the whole, of a sermon. A volume of the sermons of a preacher, who died many years since, was actually carried through the press; but before being offered for sale, it was discovered that the author of the sermons had made such uses of the published writings of other preachers, as to demand its entire suppression; and it was never distributed to the subscribers, nor offered for sale. A sermon from the pen of Rev. Dr. Skinner, of New York, several years since published in the National Preacher, and containing a very bad typographical error, was preached by another man. A gentleman present, who had read the sermon, and noticed the typographical error, watched the progress of the delivery; and, to his surprise, found that the preacher adhered so closely to the printed sermon as to deliver the blunder as faithfully as any other part of the discourse.

Cases such as these shew most clearly the great danger that this guilty and disgraceful practice may become common in the American pulpit, as well as elsewhere. It is time that the voice of earnest and solemn protestation be lifted; and that without respect of persons, or denominations, or sections of country.

Apart, however, from all incidental examples on this humiliating subject, it is necessary to look at the fact, that the clerical use of the labors of other men has been countenanced, and has received a kind of sanction, from a description of "Helps," so called; which have been favorably noticed by religious journalists in Great Britain. These "Helps" being in the English language, and thus accessible by the great body of American preachers, have apparently begun to exert some influence on this side the Atlantic, as well as the other, and need to be set in their proper light, as affording temptations among us to indolence and to clerical dishonesty. A distinguished preacher, in the English Established Church, not long since residing at one of the principal Universities, published, for the help of preachers in the work of composing sermons, six hundred "skeletons," under the title "Horæ Homileticæ;" confessedly offered as the bases of sermons to be prepared and delivered by other ministers.

That such a class of books should be countenanced by the periodical press, is matter for as much surprise as that they should be prepared for the ministerial profession by ministers. The work

Digitized by Google

to which allusion has been made was reviewed in the London Christian Examiner, in 1820, with approbation. In that review, authority for preaching the sermons of other men was attempted to be found in the early ages of the church. As though the Fathers were infallible on this as well as other subjects, St. Austin is quoted as advancing the sentiment, that "it is very lawful for a man to preach the compositions of others who are most wise and eloquent; provided he adjust his own life to the rule of God's word, and earnestly pray to God that he would make his word in his mouth edifying to his hearers." The reviewers of Horæ Homileticæ say also, as their own sentiment: "It is easy to imagine cases in which an occasional indulgence in the practice may not only be allowable, but even expedient and beneficial." By what standard of ethics men are governed, who are willing to advance such a sentiment, it is difficult to conceive.

With some secret misgivings, however, as it would seem, the reviewers of the work mentioned finally recede a little from their recommendation of the practice; and, in another place, they say: "We conceive it one of the principal benefits of Mr. Simeon's work, that it tends to supersede the necessity for so doing," (i. e., "preaching the compositions of others,") "and is calculated to lead the theological student to make use of the resources of his own mind, while he avails himself of every extraneous assistance." Of the very slender likelihood, that he who avails himself of such helps as those in the volumes named, will make much use of "the resources of his own mind," in preparing a sermon upon one of these "skeletons," let any one judge for himself, while looking at the skeleton numbered 256, and selected at random, in Simeon's books. It is on "the lost piece of silver," Luke xv. 8–10. The skeleton itself is of about half the length of an ordinary sermon. For besides three divisions or heads of discourse, and three inferences, there are given, in the introduction, eight starting points for sentences, towards the filling up; under the first head, twenty more such starting points; under the second, seventeen; under the third, twenty-one; and under each inference, six more, — eighteen in all; — the sum total of "helps" in the composition of the sermon, — exclusive of the plan, — is eighty-four sentences or commencements of sentences; or two-thirds of an ordinary sermon. In other words, a skeleton quite bountifully furnished with the flesh necessary to form the

Digitized by Google

complete body; and leaving little for the borrower to do, except to clothe it with skin, and set it to talking. And who cannot make sermons, by such a process as this? And what inducement has a preacher to "make use of the resources of his own mind, while he avails himself of" such an amount of assistance?

Of course, it is not at all surprising, that, with the example of so good a man as Mr. Simeon to lead the way, other men have embarked in the same enterprise. Two other works of this description have fallen under our notice; Hannam's "Pulpit Assistant," and "Theological Tracts," which furnish "helps" to this sort of sermonizing, in considerable abundance. These works, as well as that of Simeon, have found their way into this country; one of them has been reprinted here, and all of them have been advertised, for the particular information and benefit of the clergy. The first step towards an American book of this description has been attempted, in a recent volume of "Subjects for Sermons," with texts, compiled from the published sermons of authors, both dead and living; and recommended by some good men, who ought to have known better. While this last is a less exceptionable kind of aid than a volume of plans, it begins the temptation to the young preacher to resign his intellectual independence. He who begins with the habit of borrowing his subjects, even, is not altogether sure where he shall finally stop, short of borrowing plan, sermon, and all.

It is not alone, however, in the use of this description of helps, that intellectual independence is sacrificed. A preacher is sometimes found acting the compiler rather than the author. The plan of the sermon may be his own, and perhaps, to some extent, the filling up. But this good brother whom he has heard preach; or that favorite commentator; or that other popular sermonizer or essayist, is drawn upon for sentences, perhaps occasionally for paragraphs, all unacknowledged. And let the borrowed matter be stricken out from the discourse, and it will be seen that but a very small portion of the sermon, and that not of much value, was the preacher's own production.

Most fully is it to be admitted, that between two writers upon the same subject, there may be accidental resemblances, or striking coincidences of thought. It is most readily admitted that two men of equal powers, examining the same subject, and putting upon paper their views of it, will be liable, from the very nature

Digitized by Google

of the case, to have like thoughts and methods of reasoning. Dr. Johnson has discussed this point to good purpose.* It ought to be borne in mind, however, that, the diversities of intellectual character among men being as wide as those of their countenances, so that scarce any two are exactly alike, an actual identity of the thoughts, or train of thoughts, of two men, upon the same subject, will be a very unusual occurrence. Every man has his own way of saying his own things, and brings out his thoughts bearing an "image and superscription" so peculiarly his, that it puts a difference between his thoughts and those of other men, easily discernible by any hearer or reader who has even common discrimination in matters of style. That two men employing themselves upon the same subject, should write paragraphs, pages, and, least of all, whole sermons, exactly alike, is not to be expected. And wherever such things do occur, they create a necessity that one or the other should prove authorship. And he who cannot prove it, will find himself "in the vocative."

We would here notice some of the ways in which it may, and probably does, happen, that a preacher leans upon other minds, and slides into the vice of pulpit plagiarism. One, perhaps, is, that he reads much, and with great admiration, some particular author; and from an overweening admiration, falls insensibly into the favorite author's track of thought upon a given subject; and from familiarity with his author's thoughts, mistakes them for his own, when he comes to write. An example of this we have noticed in a volume of very popular sermons, in which the preacher rounded off one of his grandest sentences with three or four plain and undeniable lines from Milton's Paradise Lost, turned into prose; and with no acknowledgement of the true authorship of that portion of the sentence. Another way may be, that simply in the process of treasuring up other men's thoughts in the memory, the preacher does so little of separate and independent thinking for himself, upon the subject in hand, that when he commences writing, he draws upon his memory rather than upon his understanding; upon other men's stock, instead of his own. Where a preacher has read upon a subject more than he has reflected for himself, his memory will almost certainly lead him into offences of this description. Another way in which he may come to commit the fault, is by reading an author upon a subject on which he pro-

*Rambler, 143.

Digitized by Google

poses to write, and then sitting down to write his sermon, with his own thoughts stamped in advance by his author. He depends so much upon reading, that he gives himself no opportunity to originate thoughts upon the subject; or he perhaps wants patience and a spirit of intellectual enterprise for the work of origination. It is a humiliating thing, to be asserted of a preacher with justice, that "he never originates any thing."

And here, more particularly, the proper balance of the preacher's mind is disturbed by the use of the kind of helps called skeletons, already described. He first familiarizes himself with the borrowed outlines of the subject, and adopts it as his own; and then ekes out the rest of the sermon by doing just enough thinking to serve his purpose, and reach the measure of an ordinary sermon. This is much as though a man about to build a house were to take possession of a foundation already laid by a neighbor; with a frame standing upon it, the roof enclosed, and partitions put up; and who, truly, must be very destitute of enterprise, or means, or both, if he could not finish a habitation so far on the way to completion. But it would require rather a supple conscience for such a man to say: "*I* built this house." He has simply completed what another began. A preacher is the veritable author of so much of a sermon as he himself has made, and no more.

Let us now look at some of the general principles upon which the preacher should act, so that he may maintain his own intellectual independence, and maintain, also, that which is of still greater consequence, an unspotted professional character. We have considered the offence; the temptations to its commission; and some of the ways in which the offence is committed. Where, now, is the path which the preacher may pursue, with safety to himself, and with honor to the gospel of his Lord and Master?

Let him settle this point, in the outset. The sermon shall be honestly my own production; I go about the business of making, not of adopting, or making over, a sermon! Let the text be of his own choosing. Let the development of the subject from the text be his own discovery. In the careful examination of the text, as it stood in the Hebrew Bible, or Greek Testament, let him make out his own explanation of the text; and come to a conclusion which he can call his own; and let that meaning be his subject. Let him proceed to investigate still farther, the subject thus discovered. If

Digitized by Google

the investigation be his own, he may be sure that the thoughts will be his own. If, next, the arrangement of the thoughts be his own, the plan is wholly his, as it should be; being the result of a judicious classification of his own thoughts, gained by his own research and reflection, he owes no man any thanks for his plan. Having gone thus far, independent of human help, (the proffered aids of the Divine Spirit always understood, and supposed to be enjoyed,) it will follow of course, that he will be able, and will choose, to do the filling up of his plan or outline. The privilege of preparing a sermon by such a process is inestimable. In composition, let the style be his own; every sentence receiving the natural impress of his own mind. The servilely following of any master, should be shunned with care. "He who follows," said Stuart, the painter, "will always be behind." Imitations inevitably betray themselves to discerning hearers, who know how other men have written. The style of scores of the best writers, should be critically studied; but, after all, let the preacher speak like himself. By carrying these rules rigidly into practice, from the beginning of professional life, a preacher will make sermons which will be better for his own use in the pulpit, than any he can borrow or purloin. Honesty will make him rich. If he can say of even "two mites, which make a farthing," "They are my own," then his purse is in better condition than with any amount of bank-notes, or of silver and gold, of which his conscience compels him to exclaim: — "Alas, master! for it was borrowed!"

We are not to be understood, as holding the sentiment, that the Christian preacher, in order to maintain his intellectual independence, must refrain from consulting and studying the writings of other men, the books of the great, the good, the wise; of the fathers of past ages of the Church, and of the fathers and brethren of the present, who have embodied the results of study, of research, and of experience. All these are to be used diligently, and through life. They are not, however, to be used in the exceptionable ways which we have been considering. They are not to be regarded as theological or religious posts, against which indolent men may lean; or as clerical sofas, on which men of intellectual laziness and effeminacy may lounge, and slumber out their lives. The subject of the proper use of authors, is kindred to this; and needs, and we may hope will yet have, a thorough discussion, in its relation to the preacher's work.

Digitized by Google

On the use of books, by the preacher, it appears proper to say: Read, not to get matter for sermons upon a given subject, and to save yourself the expense of study, and the labor of research; nor to borrow thoughts to set forth in your own language, and to deliver as your own; nor to get together a compilation of other men's instructions, with but just enough of your own to serve the purposes of mortar in the construction of a wall. But read for the purpose of enlarging the field of knowledge of divine subjects, as a great, *general* object; and of observing how other and great minds have wrought upon the high themes presented in the Word of God; and then of learning how to exercise your own powers upon the subjects which you find for yourself, in the texts on which you wish to preach. Study the writings of great and good men, in aid of your own powers of invention. The painter and the sculptor study the works of the great masters, not simply that they may repeat what genius, talent, and taste have already accomplished; but that they may learn how the powers of the great masters were exerted, and how to discipline and employ their own, upon fresh subjects for the pencil or the chisel.* The sermons of standard preachers, may be studied to get hints on the best methods of preaching, and impulses to the young preacher's own powers, and encouragements in his arduous work; and this without borrowing a single sentence. Authors should also be studied, in order to see the positions which good and great men have taken and defended, in matters of theology and practical religion; and to learn what are the most proper positions for a religious teacher to take. Let him do this also, that he may see what has been done for the good of the church, the salvation of man, and the honor of Christ, by men of devout and studious minds; and that he may feel the power of their bright example, stimulating his own efforts. The great and good men who have gone before us, are in the stead of living preachers to those who are now preaching to others the way of life. Intellectual independence in the Christian preacher, will minister richly to his peace of conscience. It will help him to maintain self-respect, and reasonable confidence in his own resources. It will delightfully enhance his enjoyment of his work as a student and preacher. What can be the satisfaction of the

* See this subject philosophically discussed, in the Lectures of Sir Joshua Reynolds; Lecture on Imitative Invention.

Digitized by Google

dependent and indolent borrower or pilferer, in comparison with his, who, by the light of his Bible, diligently employs his own mind in the origination of just views of the divine instructions. Intellectual independence will also give the possessor an honorable place in the estimation of others. It will grace and elevate the ministerial profession. It will confer great personal influence. It will minister to mental growth, and successful acquirement of professional knowledge. It will help to insure the best and highest usefulness. And it will aid the upright minister in his preparation to give account, in the day of judgment, for the talents which God has given him; and for all the means placed in his hands for advancing the spiritual interests of his fellow-men, and the kingdom of the great Redeemer.

TRY THE SPIRITS.

EVERY Christian society deems the epistle of Paul to the Ephesians entitled to their obedient regard. The message of Christ which John was directed to write to the same church, presents, at least, an equal claim to their profound consideration. He who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, sets forth, in this short letter, some of the principles upon which his administration is to be conducted till the mystery of God is finished. What he noticed as praiseworthy at Ephesus, he would behold with pleasure in every city and town of New England.

Among the first commendations of that church, is one which denotes how promptly and strenuously they had set their faces against unworthy men, who assumed the honor of religious teachers. This proof of loyalty to Christ was marked and decisive; "Thou canst not bear them which are evil." Such was their Christian sensibility, that they recoiled from the fellowship of ungodly men. "And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars."

For this difficult service they were better qualified, perhaps, than most other bodies of believers, by the long course of training which they had enjoyed under the labors of the Apostle Paul. His parting admonitions served to keep them on the alert: "Of

Digitized by Google

your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them."

Their preëminence in this duty may also be ascribed, in part, to the instructions of Timothy, who was charged to put the brethren in remembrance of what a bishop should be; "Of good behavior; apt to teach; not a novice, etc." They seem to have resolved, that, by the grace of God, they would beware of "false apostles," "deceitful workers," advocates of "damnable heresies."

Congregational churches hold it as a first principle of their system, that the brotherhood has a voice in the settlement and dismission of pastors. No diocesan bishop, no yearly conference, can place in our pulpits the men whom we are to honor as spiritual guides. It is also a part of our religious liberty to take measures for bringing under discipline a pastor, whose actions, or whose teachings, betray a want of suitable qualifications for his office.

By what means the friends of Christ, in early times, satisfied themselves respecting the character of those who professed to be either apostles or bishops, we have no accredited account. But we may be sure, that no lazy, latitudinarian expedients won for them the praise of convicting and discarding those who *said* they were apostles, and were not.

That in this important affair, they made the Scriptures, so far as the canon was completed, the standard of judgment, no one can reasonably doubt. From their divine Master and his apostles, they had learned to appeal to the law and the testimony. As one inspired letter after another was circulated among them, the doctrines of religion were so well defined, that the abettors of another gospel could be exposed with comparative ease.

Among Congregationalists in New England, not less than other reformed churches, it has been constantly held that, "The Supreme Judge, by whom all controversies in religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

How shall the rule be applied? Suppose a candidate for ordination to be suspected, on good grounds, of holding unscriptural sentiments. When examined, he may choose to answer every question in the language of the Bible. Is this sufficient? Is it certain that he understands this language as do the church of

Digitized by Google

which he proposes to be the pastor? Let him be called upon to explain the passages which he quotes. Arius himself declared to the Council of Nice, that he was willing to adopt as his own all the language of Scripture in detail, concerning the character and perfections of Christ. So said all his adherents; and it was only when they were obliged to express in their own words, the meaning which they attached to inspired testimonies, that they were convicted of denying the proper divinity of Christ. Thus many a wolf in sheep's clothing has been found out. The more subtle and evasive the man, the more minute and thorough should be the investigation. A creed may afford no impregnable defence against heresy and scandal, but it may nevertheless prove a useful barrier; and a form of sound words, expressing what a particular church regards as the main doctrines of revelation, is also nearly indispensable in determining whether those who profess to believe the Bible are really in communion or not.

The trial and exposure of unworthy pastors and candidates is highly approved by the chief Shepherd. When the process is conducted upon Christian principles, and in a Christian spirit, it plainly tends in many ways to promote the Redeemer's kingdom; for its effects must be happy, on the whole, upon the particular church immediately concerned, as well as other churches connected with it, and upon the ministry.

No little wisdom and firmness are required for the discharge of this duty. Under ordinary circumstances, it cannot be accomplished without incurring the displeasure of the world. A church may feel constrained to withhold, or withdraw, confidence from one whose discourses and manners have won the hearts of the multitude. Some of their own number, it may be, are not prepared to concur in the dissatisfaction expressed. The young preacher who has come among them as a candidate for settlement, may prove highly acceptable to most of the church and congregation; but to the practised and discerning eyes of the more spiritual members, he gives no sufficient evidence of a sound and saving religious experience. They are aware, indeed, that the presumption is in favor of the candidate; they watch and pray against a captious and censorious temper; and gladly would they rid themselves of their scruples. But alas! in the services of the sanctuary; in the prayer-meeting; in private conversation, they have listened in vain for the manifestations of an heart-felt sense

Digitized by Google

of the evil of sin; the preciousness of Christ, and dependence upon almighty grace. If he has not wholly omitted to speak on these and kindred themes, he has handled them with a languor and reserve, not to be looked for in one who counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. His deportment, too, in social circles, seems to evince a desire to be an entertaining, well-bred gentleman, rather than a faithful watchman for souls. They tremble at the thought of placing themselves, and their children, under the spiritual guidance of one who is destitute of experimental piety.

Meanwhile, the customary steps are taken by the society, and a majority of the church, preparatory to ordination. A council is called. Some of its members are informed of the reason why the call of the church was not unanimous. The pastor elect is carefully examined, both in regard to his doctrinal views, and experimental knowledge of religion. The more searching the inquiries, the less satisfactory are the replies. At length the council resolve not to proceed to the ordination. Forthwith it is noised through the town, that a few stiff old-fashioned members of the church, more nice than wise, are the authors of all this mortification and disappointment. Bigots and schismatics are not the worst names by which they are called. The preacher himself is deeply affronted, and bends all his efforts towards strengthening his hold upon the irreligious portion of the community. His resentment runs high; and but a short period elapses, before all candid Christians acknowledge that good service was rendered to the cause of religion by the firmness and prudence of those whose consciences refused to bend to the gale of public opinion.

The solemn remonstrance of a brother, calmly expressed at the turning point, may save a community from being led by a blind guide. Such a remonstrance, earnestly and kindly uttered at the critical moment, cannot be more decided than the case demands. If it is withheld from false modesty, or apprehension of personal inconvenience, can he who suppresses it have "good report of the truth?" Does silence at such a juncture denote sympathy with the Ephesian Christians who "could not bear them that were evil, and tried them who said they were apostles and were not?" How will the disciple of Christ reproach himself in subsequent years, as he sees the foundations turned out of course by the man against whose dangerous sentiments he neglected to warn the people.

Digitized by Google

In his "History of several impostors, pretending to be ministers, remarkably detected in the churches of New England, with a faithful advice to all the churches emitted by some of the pastors on that occasion,"— Cotton Mather cites the following from the declaration of the Congregational brethren in England; "We do, in the bonds of our Lord Jesus Christ, pray and beseech all such as fear God, that they give not the least encouragement unto the preaching of men either ignorant or erroneous in the great articles of faith, or scandalous in their lives and conversations, or otherwise unmeet for this holy employment, lest they bring the guilt of these men's sins on their own souls." He states that a resolution had been adopted by ministers in this country, "That no stranger coming as a preacher among us, without sufficient assurances of his being what he pretends to be, shall be employed in our pulpits without a solemn examination of his capacities for the tremendous work of preaching the glorious gospel of God."

PROGRESS.

THE word *progress* is fulfilling a great mission just at this time. It is, indeed, the watchword of the ambitious, of the restless, and to a great extent, of the expectant part of the world. It is ever in the mouths of those who seek the ear of the multitude. It cannot be denied, that the mind of the age utters itself through this word more frequently than through any other. It is vague enough to express all the views of the most misty and nebulous intellects. It is broad enough to cover as much as any may desire, either of change, or innovation. It is a convenient substitute for various other cant terms, such as Socialism, Fourierism, Land-Reform, Rationalism, Mysticism, Theological Reform; when the open use of such phrases would be imprudent and suicidal. It is the chief stock in trade of a multitude of orators, writers, and aspirants for fame and influence. Nor can the fact be disguised, that it is a favorite word with many ministers of the gospel, who feel themselves called to mould the state of opinion and policy in the church of God. And these, we would fain hope, use it in a safe and Christian sense. No doubt all good men, who use it

Digitized by Google

at all, intend to use it in a right sense. And yet, it is to be feared, as we shall shew in the sequel, that many, not knowing what they do, use it in a manner calculated to subvert the distinctions between truth and error, and between right and wrong.

Movement may be progress. But it is very plain, that men may be advancing in sin and error, rather than truth and goodness. It is not enough, then, that there be progress; it must be of the right kind, — in the right direction. Hence, it is obvious, that it must be measured by some admitted standard, before its character can be known. It cannot itself be the measure and test of right, and truth, and duty. But the manner in which multitudes, including some of the "masters in Israel," use the word, is such as to make the course which the church and the world are actually taking at any given period, the measure and the standard of truth and of duty. This, no doubt, is often done unconsciously. But the effect is none the less mischievous and fatal on that account. If the course which the world is actually taking is the measure of truth and right, then it is perfectly evident that the Bible is no longer our rule. The office, even of conscience is superseded. All standards are overthrown. All moral distinctions and Christian principles are obliterated. And the whole issues in that monstrous dogma of infidelity and licentiousness, that "whatever is, is right." Let us, then, see whether this malignant virus be not working in the Christian church.

There is a numerous class, who plead, directly or indirectly, that the church ought to be constantly varying her doctrines, to the end that there may be "progress" in theological science. They argue in behalf of such doctrinal innovations as they wish to introduce, not merely, or chiefly, that they are supported by Scripture and sound reason; but that there must be progress in theology as well as all other sciences and arts. Indeed, they put it wholly on the footing of things secular and earthly, in respect to its changeable and progressive character. Thus, if a distinctive and established doctrine of Christianity be assailed, which the whole church has ever clung to as vital and fundamental, this class of men will countenance the innovation because it shews "progress in theology." They will ridicule those who are alarmed about the "progress" of error, as men of a past age, the victims of anile fears, wanting in liberal and comprehensive views, and out of sympathy with the advancing spirit of the age.

Digitized by Google

They will endeavor to hush the friends of sound doctrine by considerations like these, rather than by meeting them in a fair argument upon the merits of the case, the testimonies of Scripture, and the conscious experience of the people of God in all ages. Now it is perfectly evident, that so far as such considerations are brought to bear upon any controversy touching religious doctrine or practice, the Word of God is supplanted as the standard of truth and duty, and the idol Progress is installed in its place.

But it will doubtless be replied by this class of men, that they confess the Bible to be the fixed and infallible standard of Christian doctrine; but that the knowledge of it which men possess, their apprehensions and interpretations of it, are imperfect, variable, progressive; and that in this sense they hold to what they call the "improveableness of theology."

There is enough of truth in this to give it plausibility. But it is true only within certain limits; and in the intent and bearing given to it by these reasoners, it is utterly false. So far as philological, archæological, geographical, and other researches and discoveries may elucidate particular passages, it is undoubtedly true that there will be progress in our knowledge of the Scriptures. So far as the divines of any age have been entangled in the meshes of some false metaphysical system, and have suffered that system to control and pervert their interpretations of the Bible, and their statements of Christian doctrine, so far there may be improvement in theological formulas, when those false metaphysics are abandoned. But that those portions of the Bible which declare the great and vital truths of the gospel, such as form the essence of Christianity, and the basis of salvation, are dependent for their interpretation, on the progress of any secular sciences or discoveries, on any thing beyond a common knowledge of the tongues in which they were written, it would be invidious to pretend. They speak their own import to candid minds of every age. The most that is requisite for their due apprehension is the candor and the spiritual discernment of true piety. They were certainly understood by those to whom they were immediately addressed, and by all later Christians. How could it be otherwise? They are inspired for the purpose of leading men directly to piety and salvation. How can they have this effect, if unintelligible to the respective generations that have embraced them? Men are required to believe and obey them, on pain of eternal perdition, as

Digitized by Google

soon as they hear them? But why, if they cannot be rightly understood until beheld in the resplendent light of the nineteenth century? It was incumbent on Jews and Gentiles, on all of every nation, age, and clime, to whom the gospel should come, instantly to believe and obey it, on pain of this awful penalty. Is it so then, that as to its distinctive and characteristic features, it could not be correctly understood till the present or some future age?

Nor is this all. The apostles unequivocally take the ground, that their teachings of the gospel were correctly understood by Christians at the beginning; and that as then received, it was the duty of the church to adhere to them ever after, and to shun every deviation from them as perilous and fatal. Says John: "I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth; but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed." So Paul speaks of the "one faith," "the faith of God's elect," as if it were common to all his chosen in all ages. He charges us to hold fast the form of sound words, to be "established in the faith as we have been taught." He certainly inhibits us from giving countenance to any deviations from this perpetual and well-understood faith of the church; from being "carried about by divers and strange doctrines;" and from being tossed to and fro "by every wind of doctrine."

So far from taking the ground, that his doctrine was subject to the law of progress, and that we are of course to look for a more perfect development of it in the present or future, than the past, he expressly forewarns his readers, that "the time will come, when men will not endure sound doctrine."

Moreover, the guidance of the Spirit is assuredly promised to believers, to enable them to discern and know the essential and vital truths of the Word. The Saviour gives them, "not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that they may know the things which are freely given them of God." They have "an anointing of the Holy One, whereby they know all things;"—which surely means at least as much as the essentials of Christian truth. This is the inalienable privilege of every believer, and of the true church of God collectively.

Digitized by Google

And more than this. There is an actual body of Christian doctrine, which has been steadfastly received and clung to from the beginning, on the part of regenerate and sanctified persons. They have not only withstood all deviations from it, but have been jealous of all "tendencies" to deviate from it in persons claiming to be disciples. Such are the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement. The church has not only clung to these doctrines; it has refused to recognize those who deny them as entitled to the name of Christian. No General Council has yet been found that would tolerate any evasion of the doctrine of the Trinity, under the forms of Arianism, Sabellianism, or Tritheism; or the rejection of the two complete natures in the one person of Christ; or the denial that Christ died as a vicarious sacrifice to satisfy divine justice. The fall and corruption of human nature by the sin of the first man; redemption by the blood, regeneration by the Spirit, acceptance through the mediation, of the Second Man, the Lord from heaven; the necessity of faith, repentance, and holiness of life; the forgiveness of sins, the general judgment, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting, have been held fast with immovable tenacity by the Christians of every age and nation. They may have been held with different degrees of clearness. They may have been at times partially adulterated by divers admixtures of human philosophy and vain conceits. They may have been held in connection with other precious truths of Scripture which are involved in, and strongly support them, such as election, regeneration, and perseverance; yet they have been held immovably by the people of God. The church ever has contended, and will contend for them, against all opposition, and despite all "Progress" in the contrary direction, till she is no longer militant, but triumphant. Herein lie her historic and her present unity, her true catholicity. This is the only catholic faith held *semper*, *ubique*, *et ab omnibus*, by all that are sanctified in Christ Jesus.

And why should it not be so? Is not sin, that disease which the gospel is sent to heal, the same distemper in all ages? Are not the physician, the remedy, and the appliances for its cure, the same? Are not faith, repentance, and the whole ground of salvation ever the same? Is not experimental piety ever the same? Do not the same motives excite it; the same principles, affections, and practices, ever constitute it? How then can we

Digitized by Google

suppose, that, as to the substance of it, God should so set it forth, as that what seems truth to his people in one generation, shall seem error in the next?

Moreover, he who entertains the modern conception of Christian doctrine, puts it in a position which must provoke the contempt of the world, while it undermines all real faith and earnestness in himself. For how can the world respect a system which, in one breath, demands belief and obedience on pain of eternal perdition; and in the next, represents itself as hereafter liable, if not likely, to be proved defective and untrue? Must not unbelievers look upon such pretensions with ineffable scorn? And how is it possible for one to believe in that as true, which he at the same time regards as liable to be proved untrue? Can he be like those primitive Christians, who *knew* the truth? How can he be in earnest in inculcating that in which he has no certain faith? How can he make converts to a religion thus set forth? If the trumpet give a sound so uncertain, who shall prepare himself for the battle? What other result can ensue from this supposed chameleon-like changeableness of Christian doctrine, but widespread infidelity?

In fine, there has ever been this "one faith," which all true Christians have embraced as the foundation of their hopes; and the reception of which they have maintained to be necessary to salvation, or to entitle any to the Christian name. This has been well understood to be Christianity. "Other foundation can no man lay." Men may build upon it more or less of the wood, hay, and stubble of human imperfection and error in regard to affiliated doctrines, or in the explanation of these doctrines, all to be consumed at the last day. Multitudes, whole sects and communions, may so multiply these errors as to subvert Christianity itself, while yet they retain the name. This was true at the beginning. It is true now. It shews the necessity of trying the spirits, whether they be of God, by the written word: while, at the same time, as to the great truths by which we are sanctified, we cannot deviate materially from that interpretation of Scripture, in the faith of which the saints have ever lived, and the martyrs died, without peril to our souls.

Another form in which this spurious idea of progress shews itself, is in the notion sometimes advanced, that it is in the nature of things necessary that the church should experience the

Digitized by Google

effects of various forms of error, before it is possible for her to discern and accept the truth: or still worse, that what is true for one age, and ought then to be accepted as such, is false in subsequent ages, and ought to be discarded as such. It is clear that all the arguments adduced under the preceding head, bear with crushing weight upon this scheme. It denies both reality and certainty to Christian truth. It renders it as capricious and fluctuating as the wicked fancies of men. It puts us afloat upon universal scepticism. There is indeed a sense in which error is divinely permitted, and overruled for the ultimate advancement of truth. But for all that, it is none the less error, which it is sinful and hurtful to embrace. Sin ceases not to be sin, because the wrath of man shall be made to praise God. According to this system, popery was true and good for one age, and Rationalism is good and true for another. This idea, in various forms, deeply infects and poisons current literature. It surely subverts all moral distinctions, and makes shipwreck of the faith once delivered to the saints.

The same idea is often insinuated in another way. It is said, by some, to be the duty of all who would shape and bless their generation, to sympathize with that generation in its yearnings and instincts. One would suppose that the statement of this doctrine must be its confutation. If it were true, the ministers of God are required to fraternize with, and are forbidden to rebuke, the wickedness and delusion of their day. Christ, and all other martyrs to the popular hatred of truth and goodness, are inexcusable for making their lives a sacrifice to their principles.

While there then will be progress in secular science and art, so long as the human mind is preserved from stagnation: while there will as long, be progress in sacred philology and minute criticism on the Holy Scriptures; there can, in our judgment be no new discoveries, essentially changing that body of doctrines which Christians have always taken for Christianity. There are reasons for progress in the former things; because new facts are always coming to light as a basis for new opinions. But in regard to the substance of Christian doctrine, the same identical elements out of which a judgment is formed, have been fully in possession of the people of God from the beginning. These are the written word and Christian experience, with spiritual illumination for the right discernment of all things pertaining to life and godliness.

Digitized by Google

These doctrines have ever been equally important, and equally easy to be believed by sincere Christians. And, aside from certain adventitious human explanations or additions, in which there is sometimes a downward and sometimes an upward progress, all have held alike the same truth in Jesus, which they have "heard *from the beginning*," and "contended earnestly for the faith *once* delivered to the saints." This faith the Christian will make his standard, by which he will guage and test all other things. He will measure the progress of the church or the world by their increasing conformity to this standard, or their deflection from it. But he will not take the state of opinion and feeling in his own day, for the standard of truth. He will not go on the presumption that each newest phase of doctrine is of course better than any that has preceded it. He will go, rather, upon the opposite presumption. He will put upon every innovator, at least, the burden of proving his new dogma, before lending him countenance. For the progress of *men* towards truth and righteousness, he will ever valiantly and hopefully labor; though often compelled to weep that the time has come when many will not endure sound doctrine. Against that counterfeit progress which would conform Christian doctrine to the fitful fancies of sinful and deluded man, he will ever sturdily array himself.

SANCTIFICATION BY THE CROSS.

MEN are in the habit of treating Christ very much as they ought to deal by their sins, — Crucify him, crucify him! not them, — being the common cry. Just that rejection and contempt which the world deserves, is met by the glorious cross of our Lord.

Painstaking to reform the inner man, and society at large, continues from age to age. Philosophy has tried her enchantments, and the aid of legislation has been invoked. At one time, a new modelling of the social system is proclaimed as the grand panacea; at another, universal education. Mingled with the tumultuous sacking of palaces, demolishing of thrones, and erection of new republics, we now hear the watch-words, — Liberty, Equality, Fraternity! But whatever mankind, as nations or as individuals,

Digitized by Google

may gain by movements and appliances of their own, does history, do the signs of the present time, give encouragement of any approach even, to the eradication of moral evil? Mighty and sudden as seem to be the strides now taken in social improvement, is it not still pertinent to ask: "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world?" Does not God still make foolish the wisdom of this world?

It seems not to be apprehended with sufficient distinctness, even among evangelical Christians, that the death of Christ is the one conspicuous event, around which cluster all other facts and dispensations of God's gracious economy with the world at large, and with any individual believer. The work of Christ, as the suffering and atoning Messiah, is held up by the sacred writers in a commanding prominence; yes, in a sublime and jealous isolation. Patriarchs did indeed live for us; prophets prophecied for us; angels minister unto us, but Immanuel alone redeemed us. Between man and man, may be many mediators; between God and men, one only. In civil, social, and personal disasters, there are many modes of rescue, while from spiritual ruin there is one only. Man could in no way make, or be made, a satisfaction to divine justice; and by no purely human process, could he make himself, or be made, into a holy being. The Son of God alone could say: "Lo, I come!" and hence he will divide the accomplishment and the glory of this work with no other.

The application of Christ's work in the recovery of sinners is two-fold, his merits availing both for justification and sanctification. One is a single act, the other a process; one without, the other within us; by the former our relation is changed, — it frees us from the condemnation of sin; by the latter, our natures are changed, — it delivers from the power of sin. And it is through Jesus Christ exclusively, that there is purification as well as expiation, — "he came by water and blood."

The place which his great works holds with respect to justification, is comparatively well understood by evangelical Christians, but the relation of his cross to their sanctification, appears not to be so generally and distinctly apprehended. The true position to be taken is this: Apart from the doctrine of Christ's atoning death, evangelical purity and growth in grace are no more attainable than is pardon. The scriptural representation is, that Christ crucified is not more evidently made unto us righteousness and

Digitized by Google

redemption, than he is made sanctification unto us; for it is the doctrine of the cross which forms the larger part of that truth by which believers are cleansed. Without the death of Christ, there would be no death to sin; for man's inventions and methods all fail of the required end, neither possessing, nor being able to procure, any vitality. They cannot introduce the necessary evangelical element into the reform of the inner man, because they do not bring the soul into any vital connection with God's only appointed provision for our recovery to holiness.

Much as may be done by other methods towards modifying or subduing pride, envy, covetousness, ambition, anger, lust, still one or the other of them, or perhaps all in turn, will conspire to keep the soul like a troubled sea. The problem of quieting this turbid and turbulent fountain is transmitted from age to age unsolved. The question is still asked, How shall this warring world within be subdued? Better, every one agrees, better is he that is slow to anger than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city. But who is the happy victor? What are his implements? They only that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; for though we war in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Christ obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, furnishes the model and the means of spiritual conquest.

It is true, that self-control of a certain kind, and to a very desirable degree, may be acquired, and attractive and commanding exhibitions of character be found, where this higher principle of faith does not exist; and where its appropriate object, the cross, is not seen, or is even scorned. But a complete mastery over the passions, a subjugation of the inner self to the law of supreme love to God, can be realized in no other way than by looking to Christ in obedience and confidence. The atoning virtue of his death must be felt, must be appreciated, and be appropriated by faith; else the refractory spirit will never bow in meekness.

Indeed, without such appropriation, no progress whatever toward, or in the Christian life, can be made. Sin can be viewed aright, no where except in the light of Calvary. No where else upon earth does holiness so reveal its infinite worth. No where else was the price laid down which purchased the means and the efficiency for restoring diseased souls. From no other

Digitized by Google

source can motives be drawn of such nature and power as to bring carnal propensities under the reign of practical godliness.

Three leading errors here present themselves. Antinomians, for instance, maintain that the law is no longer in force, and that the gospel plan supercedes the obligation of good works. Hence they hold, that Christ died in our stead, not only as Redeemer, but as Sanctifier; that his death exempts not only from the penalty, but from the requirements, of the law, — and that his crucifixion stands in the place both of our punishment, and of our spiritual crucifixion. Those who have distinctly avowed so unscriptural a dogma, have never been comparatively numerous; yet the leaven, in some disguised form, is not uncommon. It exists and works mischievously whenever any one abuses his supposed acceptance with God, or God's readiness to forgive, into an excuse for remissness. But a disposition to turn the grace of God into licentiousness is proof that a person knows nothing of Christ crucified, or of being crucified himself; for the man who derives saving benefit from the death of Christ, is the man who mortifies the deeds of the body. All who are chosen in Christ, are chosen in him, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Another error presenting itself here, is that of Romanism. This is the mistake of putting something else in the place of Christ; and it is a frequent mistake of Protestants too. It is a striking characteristic of the papal church, that she stands forth preëminent in her penances. If these practices, — a part of them at least, — were imposed and performed in an intelligent evangelical spirit, that church would so far be a model to Christendom. But in point of fact, she presumes to impose vows which God does not appoint, and exacts a mortification of the outer, rather than the inner man; and all this, as the most charitable judgment will pronounce, in an entire absence, to a great extent, of all proper regard to the work of Christ. The system makes a virtual substitution for Christ. It crucifies its adherents, with a view to atonement, rather than sanctification; putting its rough garments and severe fastings in place of Christ's wounded head and hands. And when its crucifixes, its impressive pictures and music are employed, it is with an effect mainly upon the imagination; so that the process would not be materially different, or more Christian, if the person and events thus contemplated were wholly fictitious. Imagination is not the grand medium of sanctification.

Digitized by Google

To macerate the body is not to ameliorate the soul. It is easier to put reputed heretics to death, than to crucify one's own sins; easier indeed to kill the soul, than to kill sin.

Another error is that of the Socinians, which consists in doing away, both theoretically and practically, with the distinguishing work of our Lord. In denying the atonement in any proper sense, it removes the basis of sanctification, as well as pardon; and this it does, by resolving the influence of Christ's work into the purely moral influence of instruction and example. Christ did indeed set a faultless example, the only one ever witnessed in this world; he did indeed, if we please so to speak, die as a martyr, the chief of martyrs; but all that was the least he did. The one object of his mission, standing forth in divine peculiarity, is his redemption of God's elect. That grave man of Athens who coolly drank the fatal cup presented him by his jailor was, in his way, a martyr; and he commands our profound respect. When the Decii, father, son, and grandson, successively devoted themselves to death for their country, it was with thrilling effect upon all Roman minds, and to this day upon our minds. Yet from the whole range of history, collect all the rare instances of parental, fraternal, and patriotic devotion, they illustrate one only of the elements in Christ's self-sacrifice, — the benevolence of his interposition. The grand design of his sufferings finds no parallel in such cases, moving and valuable as they are. The death of Socrates had no power to deliver the Athenians from their corruptions and fickleness, and the self-immolation of those Romans might, or might not, have won victory for their eagles. But the death of Christ was by deliberate appointment long time previous; it was to secure a definite, certain result; it was the stipulated foundation for rescue from hell and sin of all who are to enter heaven. This is the fundamental and the crowning truth of Christianity. Valuable as is escape from wrath to come, valuable as is reconciliation to an offended God, valuable as is holiness now, and the white robe in glory hereafter, so precious to the believer is this doctrine of the cross. Christ's spotless example they prize, his incomparable precepts they prize, but it is his death as the foundation for delivery from the power, as well as guilt, of sin, which engages their profoundest admiration and gratitude. In that they have faith; without that they would not even have hope.

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.*

LIVES OF THE CHIEF FATHERS OF NEW ENGLAND. Boston. Massachusetts Sabbath School Society.

Vol. I. The Life of JOHN COTTON. By A. W. M'Clure. Vol II. The Lives of JOHN WILSON, JOHN NORTON, and JOHN DAVENPORT. By A. W. M'Clure. Vol. III. The Life of JOHN ELIOT, with an Account of the Early Missionary Efforts among the Indians of New England. By Nehemiah Adams. Vol. IV. The Life of THOMAS SHEPARD. By John A. Albro. Vol. V. The Lives of INCREASE MATHER and Sir WILLIAM PHIPPS. By Enoch Pond. Vol VI. The Life of THOMAS HOOKER. By Edward W. Hooker.

THAT turbulent disorganizers among the first settlers of New England, disappointed in their too sanguine expectations, or dissatisfied with the shape given to the constitution of the Church and State, should have complained of those who were the chief agents in the enterprise, is not strange. Some of this class shrank from the hardships and endurance necessary to success; and voluntarily returning, "excused their cowardice by defaming the country." Others, who, for outrage or sedition, could not be restrained within the jurisdiction of the colony, and who received permission to leave it, or were sent home to England, vindicated their conduct by vilifying the rulers and the people of the country. The vituperation of such men was natural and harmless. Nor are we more surprised to find, here and there, an ambitious scavenger among the prelatical and Socinian opposers of the Puritans, who, from the sinks and sewers of antiquity, will bring forth these bitter invectives and stale slanders. Yet, the Pilgrim Fathers sit above them, "like the chaste lady among the grotesque monsters in the rabble of Comus," lofty and serene, to be chattered and grinned at, by the whole rabble of satyrs and goblins.

But we have been surprised that intelligent biographers, and learned historians, and eloquent orators, who sit under the cool and protecting shade of the tree planted by the Fathers, and who

* This article was originally written for another publication, for which it was deemed unsuitable on account of the cast of its theology. It is admitted to these pages with some hesitation, inasmuch as most of the volumes reviewed are from the pens of several of the editors of this work. It was thought, however, that the regard which is due to the memory of the Chief Fathers of New England ought to overcome any such scruple; especially as the measure is sanctioned by most respectable precedents. EDS.

Digitized by Google

eat of its delicious fruit, should be willing to repeat old scandals and groundless accusations against those who planted it. And this, too, for doing only that which seemed necessary to preserve it, while taking root, from the spades and pickaxes of ruthless radicals. This is not only unjust, but ungrateful.

We do not claim that the Chief Fathers of New England were infallible or immaculate. They were, perhaps, as liable to err as are their descendants, but not more so. They did some things which their children would not now do. And we do quite as many which they would not have done. But, in coming to this country, they were engaging in an enterprise of inconceivable magnitude and importance. And we claim that their method of accomplishing it was marked with piety and prudence, liberality and sagacity; and that their motives partook of a degree of purity and moral elevation, not surpassed in any similar undertaking since the days of the apostles. We know it is said that "detraction is sometimes provoked by undue praise." But we do not admit that provocation is an excuse for detraction or slander, in a historian or biographer. Then, it should be remembered, that it may be only in the detractor's opinion, that the praise is undue. And if, with reference to our venerated ancestors, it may have sometimes been somewhat so, it is so filial, and withal so amiable, a fault, that we are compelled to infer a large measure of prejudice or ill-will in the heart, which could be excited by it, to pillage them of an iota of commendation, justly their due.

We should not, indeed, expect that the accurate delineation of the lives and characters of the Fathers of New England, would much please those of their descendants who have abjured the faith of those Fathers. Yet, we do not see how they can object to such a delineation as "sectarian." The main question is this: Is it according to truth? Is the picture a good likeness of the original? Are all the facts so stated, and the motives so interpreted, as to give to the whole figure the hues, and symmetry, and vigor of real life, "a life which has the calm of *permanence*, not the fitful flush of the moment; an expression which exhibits the entire and enduring character, not the casual predominance of any one temporary feeling?" If this main question cannot be answered affirmatively,— if some essential facts are omitted in these volumes, or some unfairly stated, or some applied to other than the legitimate objects of history,—if in any fundamental

Digitized by Google

point, a false impression is conveyed; let it be shewn, and the authors will stand publicly disqualified for the work which they undertook. But, if nothing of this can be made to appear, if the books pass the ordeal of thorough historic criticism, and yet are found to favor one system of religious faith, it should not be ascribed to a partisan spirit in the writers. This is a matter clearly beyond their control. They could not, if they would, have worked over those old stiff Puritan Fathers into modern elastic religionists, with whom freedom has usurped the place of faith; who seek after truth, but deem it temerity in any one to suppose that he has found it; with whom error is about as good as truth, if the examiner is only sincere; whose Theism has only an impersonal Deity, and whose Christianity has no Christ; yea, with whom "that is Christianity which a man believes to be Christianity."

Our Fathers were firm believers in the integrity of the sacred Scriptures, and in the inspiration of its writers. They believed that it was the only infallible rule of faith and of discipline, and the men who did not receive it as such, they regarded as infidels. They held, that truth was an objective reality as well as a subjective state or emotion; and that error was always dangerous, and might be ruinous, even when accompanied by sincerity. A sound Christian doctrine made a large part of their moral being. It was this strong meat, on which they fed out of the sacred Word, that gave them their firmness of purpose, their heroic devotion to the cause of truth, and their noble daring for the sake of liberty. It was only men of such a religious faith, who would have engaged in such an enterprise, — who could have exhibited such a prolonged and martyr-like devotion to truth, and such an unbending resistance to tyranny. Where would have been, at this very time, these puny reformers, these delicate philanthropists, and these effeminate revilers of the faith of the Fathers, had the place which this faith has occupied in the history of the world for the last three hundred years, been filled by their tinctures of Christianity, their rose-water dilutions of the gospel? Dozing, perhaps, in the caves of papal darkness, or crouching like vassals at the foot of some feudal despot's throne; cloistered like monks, or serving like menials. They have been made free by the very truths which they now despise. They have been refreshed at the very fountains which they now to seek to dry up. Nothing but the strong doctrines of the gospel received by our Fathers, and

Digitized by Google

which have been generally termed Calvinistic, would have wrought out such glorious results for New England.

The sovereignty of God and a particular divine providence,—the essential sinfulness of the race,—justification through faith in the blood of Christ, and renewal and sanctification by the Spirit,—these are the doctrines that cast man on the divine agency, and stir up his own. These make pardon possible, and move him to seek it. These shake the thrones of despots, and make tyrants tremble. These proclaim the right of religious and civil freedom, and teach men how to use it. "By their fruits, ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Can an evil tree bring forth such good fruit?

In short, the Chief Fathers were not Unitarians, but Trinitarians. They were not Baptists, but Pædo-baptists. They were not Episcopalians, but Congregationalists. And we felicitate the public on the fact that the writers of the volumes before us, are doctrinally and ecclesiastically in the true line of descent from the Pilgrim Fathers.

The six volumes of this series contain the lives of nine of the Chief Fathers of New England. Of these, eight were clergymen, and one a layman. Seven of them, Cotton, Wilson, Norton, Davenport, Eliot, Shepard, and Hooker, fled from persecution in England. Increase Mather, and Sir William Phipps were born in New England.

The two volumes by Mr. M'Clure contain the lives of the first four ministers of the First Church in Boston. The author has made himself thoroughly master of his subject. He has surveyed the whole field, and possessed himself of the richest materials which it affords. His style is distinguished for directness and strength, rather than for beauty, although some of his passages are scarcely surpassed in elegance by the finest portions of Bancroft or Macauley. He abounds in metaphors and images, and is not deficient in logic. His sense of the humorous is exquisite. His sarcasm is biting, and his pen is a perilous weapon to the revilers of the faith and order of the Fathers; and may be, sometimes, a little so to him who holds it.

Besides the interesting pieces of biography which his books contain, Mr. M'Clure has given a valuable historical statement of the ecclesiastical principles of the Fathers, and an able vindication of them from the unjust charge of a persecuting spirit.

Digitized by Google

Dr. Adams, in his Life of Eliot, has collected a large amount of interesting information relating to the missionary spirit and labors of the first settlers of New England, particularly respecting their Indian policy. This gives to his work an intrinsic value, not surpassed by that of any of his coadjutors. His large philanthropy and love of Christian missions, fit him peculiarly to write the biography of such a man as Eliot.

To those who have been accustomed to hear the planters of New England reproached as guilty of the most mercenary and exterminating conduct in this matter, we take pleasure in commending the perusal of this Life of "the apostle to the Indians."

It was one of the professed objects of the Puritans in coming to this then dreary wilderness, "to win and incite the natives of the country to the knowledge of the true God, and Saviour of mankind, and the Christian faith." The device on the seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, was the figure of an Indian, uttering the Macedonian cry: "Come over and help us." The Plymouth Colony early provided by law for the preaching of the gospel among the Indians. The Massachusetts Bay Colony soon followed their example. Eliot commenced the study of the Indian language in 1641; and five years later, began his labors among them at Nonantum. In 1661, an Indian Church was formed. Thomas Mayhew began his labors among the Indians at Martha's Vineyard in 1643, and from that time till 1803, including five generations, the Indian Church there was supplied with pastors from this apostolic family. As a result of these missionary efforts, there were in 1698, thirty Indian churches in Massachusetts, comprehending about three thousand converted Indians, being nearly three-fourths of the whole Indian population.

Eliot is entitled to the honor of being the first among Protestants, to translate the Word of God into a heathen tongue. The first Bible printed in the New World, was the fruit of missionary labor for the Indians. The first tract for the heathen, was written for the same purpose, by Thomas Shepard. Both were printed at Cambridge.

Nor were our Fathers less scrupulously just in their pecuniary transactions with the aborigines, than they were benevolent in their efforts to bring them to the Christian faith. Governor Endicott, in his first instructions from the Company, was required to extinguish the Indian title to the soil on equitable terms. Dum-

Digitized by Google

mer, in his defence of the New England charters, says that the first planters "assured the Americans that they did not come among them as invaders, but as purchasers; and they therefore collected an assembly of them, to inquire who had the right to dispose of their lands, and being told it was their sachems or princes, they therefore agreed with them for what districts they bought publicly, and in open market." It does not appear that a foot of land was taken from them without a fair remuneration. In this matter, the Pilgrim Fathers will bear an honorable comparison with the Quaker Planter of Pennsylvania; and they put to shame the statesmen of the present generation, who, in defiance of treaty stipulations, and of national justice, have waged an exterminating war with the Cherokees and Choctaws.

Between the views of Mr. M'Clure and Dr. Adams, upon the authority of our ecclesiastical polity, the careful reader will perceive some apparent discrepancy. One thinks that Congregationalism has its origin and right in the express prescriptions of the Word of God. The unexplained language of the other seems to convey the idea that there is no such right or prescription to be found there. Mr. M'Clure says: "The worship of the church is to be fashioned after the New Testament example. We have there a fair transcript of the pattern given on the mount, a true copy of the ground plan and elevations." To follow this, would be unquestionably safe. To depart from it will be certainly to go wrong. It is not enough to justify such a usage in divine worship to say that there is nothing in the Bible against it. The truth is, "as John Norton tersely expresses it, 'there is enough against it, if there be nothing for it.'" *

The language of Dr. Adams is, "With regard to the appointment of any special form of Church Government, it would seem that there is a wise silence in the New Testament." "We may infer what form of Church Government prevailed under the apostles, though different readers of the New Testament will draw different inferences. This shews that no form is prescribed as essential, otherwise, we should not have been left in the dark, on so important a subject." "Our preference for the Congregational form of church government, is not properly founded on any prescriptions in the New Testament, but on our convictions that

* Vol. I. P. 127.

Digitized by Google

this form is most accordant with the genius of Christianity, and of republican government. But so surely as we insist on Congregationalism as having any divine right or authority, and we seek to propagate Congregationalism with such convictions, we are as surely High-Churchmen and Puseyites as can any where be found." *

Notwithstanding this apparent discrepancy between these two adherents to the faith and order of the Fathers, we are assured on the best authority that it is only apparent. And we account for this appearance of difference in opinion where none exists, partly by the different points of view from which the writers contemplated the subject; and partly from the want of a sufficiently distinct announcement by Dr. Adams, of the object at which he aimed. Mr. M'Clure evidently wrote of Congregationalism, as a *constitution* or statute-law, and Dr. Adams as a collection of *usages*, or as common law. As a constitution comprising the distinctive principles of ecclesiastical polity, both ascribe to Congregationalism prescription and authority. As a collection of mere usages, set forth as law, on the ground of human precedent, both would be equally agreed in withholding these from it. This distinction, we think, however, the language of Dr. Adams does not make sufficiently evident. He gives a blow at "a sectarian spirit," which he would rebuke when it "insists on a perfect simplicity of worship," as well as when it "urges the adoption of all the ceremonies of the Cathedral." This is the true Congregational position. Our polity no more consists in "the absence of all forms," than in the multiplication of them. Its essence is that which will give vitality to all reverential forms, and yet is confined to none. With the thoughts which we wish to submit, Dr. Adams, we are confident, would in the main concur, though they may bear against, what at first sight, might seem to be the natural construction of his own language.

We entirely agree with him that neither the Congregational, nor any other form of church government, is prescribed in the Word of God as essential to the existence of a church, or to acceptable worship. But, while we admit that churches which are not governed according to the Congregational discipline, may be true churches, we cannot concede that this discipline has no

* Vol. III. Pp. 62–64.

Digitized by Google

prescription in its favor in the New Testament, and is without any divine right or authority. Upon what does our church-polity rest, if it has no prescriptions in the New Testament? Is it upon mere human authority? With whom then, does this authority reside? With the fathers or their children? With the Pope or the Pastors,— the bishops or the churches? Should Dr. Adams's right to administer the sacraments be disputed, because his ordination was not by diocesan bishops, would he find no "prescription in the New Testament" for the parity of the clergy? Should the government of his church by the voice of its own members, be declared to have no divine sanction, would he not find a warrant for it in some declarations of Scripture? Should his ministerial brethren conspire to constitute one of their number Bishop of Boston, and that one should claim jurisdiction over him, and the right to legislate for his church, would he not meet the assumption by a pure divine independency of the churches? He admits that the Congregational church government, "comes nearer the spirit of Christianity" than any other. But it does not come near enough to receive any divine right or authorization from it. He prefers it because he thinks it is "more accordant with the genius of Christianity" than any other mode. But this, even, is a matter of inference, based upon no prescription in the New Testament; in respect to which, "different readers draw different inferences," and which also, according to Dr. Adams, shews that we "are left in the dark on so important a subject." But are we left in the dark? Is God a wise and considerate Father, and the church his family? And has he left no directions for its government and training as a family?

Certainly this was not the view of the Chief Fathers of New England. No one conviction was deeper in their minds, than that the constitution and principles of church government are laid down in the Word of God. This was the great point of contest between the Puritans and the hierarchy in England. In "The Reasons of Church Government," by Milton, the first chapter has the following title: "That church government is prescribed in the gospel, and that to say otherwise is *unsound*." The title of the second chapter is: "That church government is set down in Holy Scripture, and that to say otherwise is *untrue*." This was the view held by many of the English Reformers. They received the Bible as a rule for *discipline* as well as doctrine. The first

Digitized by Google

and only thing agreed upon by the Pilgrim Fathers before they left England, respecting their church-polity, was, "the reformation of the churches, according to the written Word of God." And the result to which they came was, that "the Congregational discipline *was instituted by Christ and the apostles*." "The parts of church government are all of them *prescribed* in the Word of God. So that it is not left in the power of men, officers, churches, or any State in the world, to add, or diminish, or alter any thing in the least measure therein." So say the Fathers in the Cambridge Platform, in which Eliot fully agreed with them. They believed that their church government was "prescribed in the Word of God," and "extracted out of the Word of God." This they regarded as giving it "divine right and authority." And they insisted on this in all their controversies. With this "conviction," they sought "to propagate" it. Were they all High-Churchmen? Were Cotton, and Hooker, and Wilson, and Davenport, and Shepard, and Mitchell, and Mather, "as really Puseyites as can any where be found?"

If there is one thing on which the Congregational Churches of New England are at the present time more agreed than any other, it is, we believe, in referring to the New Testament as prescribing the principles of their polity. That Christ is the sole lawgiver in his church, that he has enacted certain laws for its government, that these are Congregational, and are found in the New Testament, are ground-truths in our polity. These fundamental principles are the basis of the works of Upham, Woods, Bacon, Punchard, Mitchell, and others who have written particularly on the subject. Dwight, Hopkins, Spring, Emmons, and others, were agreed in the same. Are all these men Puseyites? They have all founded their "preference for the Congregational form of church government" on the "prescriptions in the New Testament," and they have insisted upon these as imparting to it some divine right and authority. But this, so far from justly subjecting them to the charge of being High-Churchmen, in any odious sense, constitutes one cardinal point of the difference between them and High-Churchmen.

The life of Thomas Shepard, the fourth volume in the series, is written by Dr. Albro, the successor of Shepard, as pastor of the same church. The book is written in an easy and flowing style, which bears the reader along as on the quiet bosom of some mean-

Digitized by Google

dering stream. You float on through rich meadows, and fertile fields, and you are regaled by the fragrance of sweet flowers, and the flavor of delicious fruits. The author has imparted a kind of life to even the dry bones of history. You know that you are looking upon a picture; but you are well-nigh beguiled into the belief, that it is the living original. It is so natural, so life-like, that when you finish the book, you almost imagine yourself to have been a fellow-pilgrim, and fellow-sufferer with the good old Puritan pastor. You seem to have heard him preach and pray, and to be still living under the influence of his fervid eloquence, and his earnest piety. Dr. Albro was peculiarly happy in the subject which circumstances assigned him. There is a beauty and a symmetry, and a moral elevation, in the character of Shepard, not surpassed by any of the Fathers.

> "There is a kind of character in his life,
> That, to the observer, doth his history
> Fully unfold."

Jacobi says of Göthe's Autobiography, which Göthe had called "Imagination and Truth:" "I was a party to many of the events related, and can bear witness that the accounts of them are truer than the truth itself." So, in writing the biography of a man, there is a key-note, which of itself, will almost discover the whole melody and harmony of the subject. It will explain facts, and interpret motives and actions; and lead to a *whole* view, more like the man's own true self, than could be produced by any analytical or synthetical arrangement of the parts. Dr. Albro, we think, has struck the key-note in the music of Shepard's life.

He has also done good service in showing that the separation of the Fathers from the English Church, was not from fanaticism. It was occasioned by the enforcement of cruel Test Acts, and Conformity Laws. The design of the original reformers, in the Church of England, was never carried out. In the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, and in the reign of the Stuarts, the reformation went backward. Popish vestments and a semi-popish Liturgy, "the dangerous earnests of sliding back to Rome," were insisted on as essential to the true worship. Christianity was neither an objective doctrine, an inward life, nor a quickening power. But it was an external sign, a gorgeous ceremony.

Digitized by Google

"They hallowed it, they fumed it, they sprinkled it, they bedecked it, not in robes of pure innocency, but of pure linen, and with other deformed and fantastic dresses, in palls and mitres, gold and gewgaws, fetched from Aaron's wardrobe, or the flamen's vestry." Prelacy was the great Diana of the church, "under whose inquisitorious and tyrannical duncery," says Milton, "no true and splendid wits could flourish." The Puritans were persecuted and oppressed. They were not allowed to preach or to teach. They were fined and imprisoned. They were whipped and mutilated. And, when they could endure no longer, they "fled into the wilderness," like the woman of the Apocalypse, before "the great red dragon," where also, like her, they had "a place, prepared of God." They brought with them a doctrine, "winnowed and sifted from the chaff of over-dated ceremonies," and a discipline drawn from the pure fountain of the Word of God. With this doctrine and this discipline, "they made the wilderness and the solitary place to be glad for them, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Dr. Pond has written a few chapters in the fifth volume of this series, which will go far to disabuse the minds of his readers, in respect to certain allegations against Dr. Mather and his son, more particularly and deliberately made in President Quincy's History of Harvard University. Indeed, with those who have read the reviews of that history, which appeared in the American Biblical Repository, and especially in the first volume of this publication, nothing more was necessary effectually to impeach the character of the work for historical accuracy, and impartiality. Of President Quincy's reputation as a historian, these reviews have been thoroughly destructive, both in this country and in England. He had a case to make out in favor of liberal Christianity, and against orthodoxy. The reputation of the present college dynasty depended, in part, upon his gaining his point. This gave a partizan character to his whole work, and destroyed its value, except as containing rich materials for an impartial history. President Quincy judges his friends with less discrimination than might have been expected, and his foes with less charity. He sometimes approves with little discretion, and censures without magnanimity. His eye hunts for the follies of the wise, and the frailties of the good, if they do not pronounce his Shibboleth. In their noblest and loftiest actions, he suspects them of bad

Digitized by Google

motives, as some visionaries have supposed all high mountains to be hollow. He employs their diaries to convict them of a spirit and intentions, of which, he has not the magnanimity to say that they also prove them innocent. His treatment of the Mathers, is like that of physicians in post-mortem examination, not to discover the powers of life, but to descry and proclaim the nature and workings of disease. His partisan spirit, amounting sometimes almost to acrimony, disqualified him to write the history of such men as were most of the old, sturdy, orthodox Pilgrim Fathers. He is incapable of appreciating the central principle of their character, and is not competent to pass judgment upon them. He views them as under a cloud, which rests only upon his own mind. The dark and sombre hues with which their characters seem overcast, are in the *organ*, not in the *object*, of his vision. Remove the sectarian cataract from the eye, and let these same characters, so gloomy and discordant in his sight, be bathed in the sweet light of divine charity, and new and unexpected harmonies and beauties would be disclosed to him, as the result of those powers, "which have striven and struggled in the drama of life." We do not complain of the eulogies bestowed upon his favorites. This is in the general direction of charity, although it may proceed from a spirit less divine. But we blame him chiefly for the acrimony, with which, contrary to both truth and charity, he has stigmatized some whom he considered as enemies.

It is the able defence of the Mathers, whom President Quincy had especially traduced, which seems to have occasioned this volume of Dr. Pond's to be regarded with somewhat of disfavor, by a reviewer of these Lives, in the January number of the North American Review. Admitting that President Quincy had judged Increase Mather, the father, with a little undue severity, the reviewer, as if to make up for the admission, is exceedingly liberal in contemptuous epithets, bestowed upon Cotton Mather, the son. "He was a conceited, vapory pedant; an ambitious, intriguing lover of notoriety. He accumulated more worthless learning than any man of his time, and made himself ridiculous by continually obtruding it." That the style of Cotton Mather was faulty, and that he made some attainments which were of more value in his time than ours, is very true. But that much valuable "learning" of the Fathers, is "worthless" to some of the children, simply because they do not know how to use it, and that

Digitized by Google

some deep things seem shallow, for no other reason than that men have not length of line enough to sound them, is also true. The Alps even, appear "vapory" to one standing in a mist; and truth, "which loves open dealing," seems "intriguing" to one who is convicted by it.

> "The noble Brutus
> Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious,"

Therefore ambitious Brutus and Cassius slew Cæsar.

> "What private griefs they have, alas! I know not,
> That made them do it."

The reviewer says, that "Dr. Pond makes a more direct attempt than any of his coadjutors to uphold and perpetuate certain peculiar views of the Puritans," which had been "generally allowed to pass into oblivion." Among these "peculiar views," are "the doctrine of devils," or the influence of fallen angels, and "special providence." Of the former he says: "We supposed it had no believer among intelligent men in our days;" and the latter he pronounces "the most irreligious of all religious notions. If the doctrine has any weight at all, it is gained at the expense of a general providence." Now, did he not know, that these two doctrines were never "peculiar to the Puritans?" Was he not aware, that they have had a place in the symbols of almost the entire church, Romish and Protestant, from the time of the apostles even down to "our days." Is the stigma of ignorance to be fastened upon such men as Dr. Pond, for adhering to doctrines which are most sincerely believed by nine-tenths of Christendom? Is this almost universal inculcation of religious sentiments, allowing them "to pass into oblivion"? "Special providence the most irreligious of all religious notions!" We do not marvel that the "learning" of the Fathers, should seem "worthless," to one who has discarded the doctrines which were so ably defended by that learning. It is nothing new that the Fathers should even be thought to have made themselves "ridiculous," in thus "obtruding it," by one who affirms a particular providence to be incompatible with a general providence, and the most irreligious of all religious notions.

But what is the doctrine of special providence? It "evidently," says the reviewer, "has no other foundation than this; that men think they can detect God's purpose and presence more

Digitized by Google

signally in some incidents than in others." By what authority does he affirm this? No respectable writer on the subject has ever so presented it. The Puritans held no such doctrine. Their descendants hold none such. It is a gross caricature,—an unjustifiable misrepresentation.

Providence is that care of his creatures which God exercises over them in sustaining and governing the world. If it extends to all creatures and events, it is general. If it extends to every creature and event, it is particular or special providence. Nor does special providence imply that "some things are more providential" than others. Every thing is providential. God is regarded, by those who believe in a particular providence, as being present on all occasions, and as having a purpose in all events. His care is not all expended upon the sublime events of life, nor his purpose excluded from the minutest. Not a sparrow falleth without him, and the hairs of our head are all numbered. This is the view of a special providence entertained by the Puritan Fathers. It entered into their whole character, and exerted a controlling influence upon their whole life. "Not content," says Macauley, "with acknowledging in general terms, an overruling providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was the great end of their existence. They rejected with contempt, the ceremonious homage, which other sects substituted for the worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity, through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face." "People who saw nothing of the godly, but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate, or in the field of battle." "The intensity of their feelings on one subject, made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors, and pleasure its charms." As were the Puritans of Old England, so in a great degree were the Chief Fathers of New England.

The sixth volume in the series, by Dr. Hooker, is a pleasant tribute to the memory of his ancestor. There is less striking inci-

Digitized by Google

dent in the life of Hooker than in that of some of his distinguished contemporaries. Of his parentage we know nothing. But from his character, we infer that they were of the seed of Abraham according to the promise. Such a scion could hardly have sprung from any thing but the root and fatness of the good olive. We are first introduced to him as a student in Emanuel College, Cambridge; at which place, the religious change in his character, and his superior powers of mind, gave promise of his subsequent eminence. He preached with distinguished success in his own country, till, by the persecutions of Laud, he was driven to Holland. After residing there three years, he returned to old England with the view of transplanting himself to New England. Cotton and Stone were his companions in tribulation, when leaving his native land. The cordial welcome extended by the planters to these three "bell-wethers" of the scattered flock, as they were tauntingly termed,— the settlement of Mr. Hooker at Newtown, and his removal to Hartford, — his great usefulness in shaping the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of Connecticut, and his agency in the confederation of the infant colonies, are the leading events of his public life in his adopted country.

Of his controversial works, the "Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline," is the chief, and this alone would entitle him to enduring remembrance. But it is in his practical writings, that the sweetest savor of his name will be transmitted to posterity. Dr. Hooker has given us just enough of these to excite our desire for more. Thomas Hooker died July 7th, 1647, aged sixty-one years. His sun went down at noon; suddenly setting amid the brightness of refulgent day, it has reflected through two centuries, in five generations of descendants, a sweet light upon the promise: "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

There are others of these Fathers, whose biography should be made more accessible to our youth. We hope the series thus auspiciously commenced may be continued. Let the lives of the Fathers be faithfully written, let the results of their labor and self-denial be compared with their principles and their characters, and they will need no other vindication in the view of impartial men. Of their faults, we can forgive much, for the sake of the spirit of liberty which they cherished; and we can forgive whatsoever may remain, when we consider the fruits of the labor which they performed.

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

SCHLEIERMACHER. — This remarkable man died in 1834, after a life of great activity as a preacher, author, and theological professor. On his death-bed, when the last struggle seemed to have been passed, he so far rallied as to say: "We have the atoning death of Jesus Christ, his body and his blood." He then, his hands trembling with the spasms of death, administered in due form the Lord's Supper to himself and a few friends who wept around his couch; and affirming his full faith in the words of institution uttered by our Lord, he gave his parting blessing, adding the words: "In this love and communion, we are and remain *one*." In this affecting manner, he "gave up the ghost;" perhaps, in imitation of the good Severinus, an apostle to the ancient Germans, who after thirty years of most severe and successful labors, among the savage tribes that dwelt on the banks of the Danube within the present bounds of Bavaria and Austria, departed this life, on the first of January, in the year 482. In his last hours, he gathered his friends around him, fervently exhorted them to be fully consecrated to God, and embraced them every one. He then joyfully administered to them the Holy Supper; and bade them, not to weep, but to sing psalms. And when, for grief, they could not utter the words, he himself broke forth in singing: "Praise the Lord in his sanctuary: — let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord;" and with these words, he ceased to breathe. (Neander's Denkwürdigkeiten, iii. 47.)

Of one who died so like the good old sainted Severinus, we cannot but hope the best; and yet there was much about Schleiermacher to distress the minds of those who love "the truth of Christ" in its simplicity. He was one of the most enthusiastic of Platonists, — a class of men strongly moved by the moral wants of our nature, to reconcile naturalism with supernaturalism; and to do this by mixing them up in the solvent of transcendental idealism, thus producing a result which is neither one thing nor the other. When Christianity was first preached, many of the Platonic school stiffly opposed the new religion, because it laid so much stress on humility and self-renunciation. Others, again, like Justin Martyr, found the transition from the "Academy" to the Church most easy; and rejoiced in the cross, as a glorious divine solution of all their doubts and questionings. But from hence arose sore evils and sad corruptions. The Platonic Christians were ashamed of the plain doctrine of Christ crucified as a Redeemer, so easily apprehended by the "simple faithful." They began to philosophize about the person and work of the Divine Logos, to get up secret schools of higher speculations for the initiated and the cultivated, and to reconstruct the whole Christian system. Hence sprang the New-Platonists, and the Gnostic swarms, which so early, so long, and so miserably, seduced and distracted the churches.

Schleiermacher resumed the old attempt to reorganize Christianity into a scheme of natural supernaturalism. It must be owned, that his method was a vast improvement on the soulless Rationalism which

Digitized by Google

then domineered in Germany; even as Platonism was an improvement on the Paganism, which doomed Socrates to drink the fatal hemlock. But it would be hard to name one leading doctrine of the gospel, which is not perverted by Schleiermacher from its evangelical integrity. Notwithstanding his dying confession, he had strongly denied the objective reality of the Atonement, as a satisfaction to divine justice, as a literal ransom for man's captive soul, as a substitute for our merited punishments. We can have no sympathy, therefore, with the efforts recently made in either England to exalt him as a great light in the church. This has been done by some orthodox scholars, we doubt not, with good intent, but it can only come to deplorable results. Even Professor Norton, the "great gun" of the Unitarian battery, deplores, in the last number of the Christian Examiner, "the strange connection" into which his denomination has been brought "with the Pantheists, Spinoza and Schleiermacher." If it is so deleterious even to Unitarianism, that these men have been "praised and recommended as religious instructors" in its publications, must we not expect the most disastrous results to orthodoxy, if the same suicidal course shall be pursued among ourselves? Let Schleiermacher be commended for striving to draw up his sunken countrymen from the dead level of a stagnant Rationalism. But what folly for the sons of the Puritans, dwelling on the sun-lighted summits of their Bible orthodoxy, to descend for superior illumination to those shadowy and misty hills where the ardent German waved his torch over his dreamy people, drowsing in the deeper night below him!

THE PRAISING OF BOOKS. — Among the many volumes tumbled out upon the reading public by the vomitories of the great publishing houses, there are not a few which mingle much that might be useful and good, with more or less of what is exceedingly pernicious. There has been a recipe invented, we believe in Connecticut, for commending such books on liberal and pious principles. It is a pity that no patent has been taken out, to secure the benefit of the discovery to its author, whoever he may be; for it can benefit no one but himself, and the writers to whom his puffing practice is applied. Had he secured an exclusive right to use his invention, it would have been less likely to become too commonly employed.

The recipe is on this wise. The critic takes up some such book as Morell's "Philosophy of Religion," or Bushnell's "God in Christ," or Professor Crosby's pamphlet *at* the American Tract Society, and thus he discourseth: This work contains some things quite opposite to received opinions, and some things we much regret to see; but we commend them to the serious consideration of the enlightened friends of truth, who may possibly find themselves compelled to modify their views in consequence: — and in connection with its errors, and partly in consequence of them, the work contains much able reasoning, many new and startling truths, and many passages of surpassing eloquence and fervid piety, all which the judicious reader will know how to appropriate to his own pleasure and profit!

By ringing a variety of changes on this strain of remark, the critic is enabled to praise in reality, while he seems to condemn; and with-

Digitized by Google

out committing himself for or against the truth, he gains a delightful reputation for liberality of feeling, and breadth and comprehensiveness of views. But this shallow device, after it has done what mischief it can among shallow minds, must speedily pass into the gulf of oblivion. If good books were rare, and hard to be obtained, it might be excusable to advise judicious readers, (and what readers are not judicious in their own esteem,) to get what advantage they can out of books that are infected with pernicious and ensnaring principles. But in the overflowing abundance of works of unexceptionable merit, it is preposterous to "give pratique" to the plague-spotted wares of the bookselling magnates. It is as if a chemist, whose duty is to analyze waters, were to bring a vessel of foul and noxious liquid, where the pure Cochituate gushes from a thousand hydrants, and say: "O ye judicious drinkers! here is a cask containing some admirably fair water, a little touched, unhappily, with poisonous ingredients; but you will find it very refreshing, and quite innocuous, if you sip it after distillation, or after mixing a proper proportion of neutralizing agents; or if you are careful to take efficient antidotes as soon as it is swallowed." Doubtless the common sense of the multitude would exclaim: "Away with your vile mixture! Through the good providence of God, we are too well supplied, to be reduced to the necessity of wasting time and expense in the attempt to use that dangerous beverage with impunity."

SOUTHEY'S COMMON-PLACE BOOK. — This volume contains quite a large share of the raw material, out of which the Poet Laureate wove his "thick-coming fancies." It is no longer a secret whence he drew his vast stores of literature, with which he was ready furnished on every emergency. He not only read every thing, but took copious notes of his reading, so that it was ever after available. We consider the practice of common-placing to be of immense advantage, whether as a discipline of taste and judgment, or as accumulating for use the acquisitions of a studious life. What Southey thought as to the utility of this habit, is evident from his example. Says Dr. Todd, in the preface to his "Index Rerum," "Let a young man, when he begins life, form the habit of making an index to all that he reads which is truly valuable, (and he ought to read nothing else,) and at the age of thirty-five or forty, he has something of his own, and which no price could purchase." Not to urge upon the young student the advice of John Locke and many others, we would stir them up by the opinion of Lord Bacon. "I am not ignorant," he says, "of the prejudice imputed to the use of common-place books, as causing a retardation of reading, and some sloth or retardation of memory. But because it is but a counterfeit thing in knowledge to be forward and pregnant, except a man be deep and full, I hold the entry of common-places to be a matter of great use and essence in studying, as that which assureth copy * of invention, and contracteth judgment to a strength." It will be a useful practice for any one who wishes to

* *Copy*, from the Latin *copia*, is an obsolete form, for which we use the word *copiousness*.

Digitized by Google

preserve the best fruits of his reading, to make a memorandum in pencil, on the blank leaf at the end of the volume, of every page on which any passage occurs which he would like to save for use, adding to the number of the page the name of the topic. Then, when he has finished the book, let him go back to each of those pages; and, if the passage be short, let him copy it into his Index; — if long, let him make such a reference as will enable him to find it at once when he may want it again. A volume which will afford half-a-dozen such entries, pays well for the perusal. And the index containing the entries, will afford, as the admirable old Thomas Fuller says, "many notions in a garrison, whence the owner may draw out an army into the field on competent warning." A conscientious student will feel himself bound to make this saving of what he finds in the course of his researches. Hence we can understand the remark of Sir J. B. Williams, in his first series of "Letters on Puritanism:" Commonplacing, the usual accompaniment, in days of yore, of a literary taste, was, at one period, as you may see in Dr. Parr's Life of Archbishop Usher, 'affirmed to be flat puritanical.'"

FRENCH REVOLUTION OF 1848. — This work, from the fiery heart of Lamartine, and ably translated by Messrs. Durivage and Chase, has just come from the press of Phillips, Sampson, and Company. The subject is one of deepest interest; and the author himself one of the most interesting of men, is no small part of his subject. He is the hero of the events he celebrates. It is well to have his views upon that rousing revolution put on record; though the results are not yet sufficiently developed, to allow its history to be written. The time has not come for that; inasmuch as it is far from certain that the revolution is a finished business. But we warmly recommend this volume to all readers who would like to see on the printed page, a sort of moving panorama of the course of thrilling events, which for that year fastened the eyes of the world on the political theatre of Paris. The unrolling of the long picture presents a series of sketches, done to the life by the hand of a master who saw every thing from the most commanding and central point of view; and who knows how to make the glowing canvass eloquent with deeds of marvel, and with passionate description.

WINDINGS OF THE RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE. — The fanciful title of this book seems to point out the author, even if the title-page were not graced with his name. Dr. Cheever has here undertaken to trace "the development, discipline, and fruits of faith." Perhaps no writer among us has treated this subject so often, so extensively, and so well. The life of faith seems to be with him, as with Paul, and Luther, and Edwards, the favorite subject of study. And it deserves this preference, for it is the root of all grace, and the root of all blessings. A true and saving faith is the most active of all affections, and sets all the others to work. It is, as Coleridge remarks, "the source; — and charity, that is, the whole Christian life, is the stream from it." And he has elsewhere remarked: "It is indeed faith alone that saves us; but it is such a faith as cannot be

Digitized by Google

alone." In this, he well agrees with the saying of Calvin: "Faith alone justifieth, but not that faith which is alone."

In the work before us, Dr. Cheever has displayed his peculiar excellences as a popular religious writer. He has treated his subject with the most close and careful discrimination as to the nature and evidences of saving faith. Indeed, if the book has any prominent fault, it is in its minute distinctions, and extended analysis of his subject. He lays every nerve of it bare, in his anxiety that it shall not be mistaken or abused.

While we are criticizing his work, we may as well allude to the excessive use of Italic letters on these pages. In the first place, they are a disfigurement; in the next place, when used so often as they are here, they are used carelessly, and many words are thus made prominent which are not at all emphatical; then again, it is but a poor compliment to the reader's discernment, thus to point out what he ought to see at a glance for himself; and in the last place, it looks like a cheap device to help an untransparent rhetoric by means of type-metal. It is to be wished that many writers, and editors, beside Dr. Cheever, were, in this one particular, to follow the politics of pope Pius IX., by being, in printers' phrase, "more Roman, and less Italic."

There are few writers more ready than Dr. Cheever, or who have the whole English speech more perfectly at command. He is never at a loss for felicitous language to express his subtle refinements, or his beautiful imaginings. No man is more thoroughly and naturally original. And this originality is the more admirable, because it never vents itself, as does that of some ambitious theologues we could name, in startling paradoxes, audacious speculations, and sweeping assertions, threatening destruction to the faith. His rapt imagination, in its boldest flights, is guilty of no doctrinal extravagances, and no insidious tamperings with a sound and scriptural orthodoxy. He has drank too long and too deep from the "River of the Water of Life," to have any taste for the alcoholic poisons distilled by "art and man's device." We do, therefore, the more heartily commend his new book, to such as take delight in tracing the "wanderings" of the vital stream of religious experience, through its lengthened, varied, and delightful course.

PASTORAL REMINISCENCES. — A volume with this title has been published by Rev. Shepard K. Kollock, consisting of narratives of remarkable occurrences during his ministry. Not every minister of twenty or thirty years' standing, could relate his experiences in a manner so earnest and interesting; but probably every one could rehearse as many and as striking incidents, of the power of sin, and of the triumphs of grace, among their hearers. We have seldom known such a minister who, on occasion, had not his tale to tell of scenes of deathless interest in the course of his labors. Seeing that a vast many books must be made about something, it will be a matter of regret, if many of our pastors do not follow Mr. Kollock's example; and tell, for the encouragement and instruction of their brethren, what they have seen and heard, and how they have felt and acted, in the

Digitized by Google

greater emergencies of their calling as watchmen over the souls of their people. In this way, a great diversity of gifts might be brought to view, and useful hints be dispersed abroad for the help of those who act as spiritual guides. "All ministers," it has been said, "are God's husbandmen; but some of them can only plough in soft ground." Yet such ground as is easiest tilled, is usually the most productive. "The instruments and work-tools of God," says Luther, "are different and not alike; even as one knife cutteth better than another." To know how the ablest pastors have advised, with happy results, in difficult cases, is of great assistance to those who are unexpectedly thrown into positions for which they are not exactly adapted. We can think of men of large and blessed experience in revivals, and the whole work of the ministry, who, if they would but record their own experiences as Mr. Kollock has done, would leave a valuable legacy to all who shall follow them in the sacred office. Nor would such record fail to be most profitable and attractive to the general reader, who gladly finds something in the actual experience of others, which shall be parallel to his own, and suggestive of spiritual succors to himself.

ORDINATIONS.

Sept. 20. Mr. A. C. Pearce, New City, Springfield, Mass.
" 27. Mr. A. J. Bates, at Lincoln, Me., as an Evangelist.
Oct. 2. Mr. Dwight W. Marsh, at Dalton, Mass.; as a Missionary to China.
" 10. Mr. G. B. Little, First Church, Bangor, Me.

INSTALLATIONS.

Sept. 5. Rev. Edward W. Hooker, D. D., South Windsor, Con.
" 6. Rev. A. G. Pease, Waterbury, Vt.
" 7. Rev. Alfred E. Ives, Deerfield, Mass.
" 19. Rev. Edmund Burt, Newfield, Me.
" 26. Rev. H. S. Clark, Franklin St. Church, Manchester, N. H.
" " Rev. John Baker, First Church, Kennebunkport, Me.
" " Rev. Reuben S. Hazen, Westminster, Canterbury, Con.
" " Rev. Andrew Sharpe, Rockville, Con.
Oct. 3. Rev. Samuel Wolcott, Belchertown, Mass.
" " Rev. Henry Seymour, East Hawley, Mass.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Aug. 10. Rev. Reuben Mason, Glover, Vt., æ. 73.
Sept. 2. Rev. J. B. Loring, Yorktown, N. Y., æ. 57.
" " Rev. William Tobey, Scarboro, Me., æ. 42.
" 16. Rev. Bezaleel Pinneo, Milford, Con., æ. 81.
" 24. Rev. Dudley Phelps, Groton, Mass., æ. 50.
Oct. 1. Rev. William J. Boardman, Northfield, Con., æ. 55.
" " Rev. Daniel Campbell, Orford, N. H., æ. 70.

Digitized by Google

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the OBSERVATORY, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

E. N. KIRK,
J. A. ALBRO,
J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
S. AIKEN,
M. HALE SMITH,
E. BEECHER,
W. M. ROGERS,
J. GUERNSEY,
W. A. STEARNS,
I. P. LANGWORTHY,
A. W. McCLURE
LEONARD WOODS,
MOSES STUART,
RALPH EMERSON,
B. B. EDWARDS,
EDWARDS A. PARK,
AUSTIN PHELPS,
G. W. BLAGDEN,
N. ADAMS,
GEO. RICHARDS,
RUFUS ANDERSON,
SAMUEL M. WORCESTER.

Digitized by Google

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasu in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increas efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, th the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigo ous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ f that portion of the religious community which may be interest therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the edit rial charge of the work: Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albr D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClur Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, an ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangemen therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of th OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literatur and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New Englan

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispens ble to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could b afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the fi hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a recipro cating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
21 *Cornhill, Boston.*

VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 3.] DECEMBER, 1849. [No. 12.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

EDITORS:

N. ADAMS, D. D.
J. A. ALBRO, D. D.
E. BEECHER, D. D.
E. N. KIRK,
A. W. McCLURE,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. V. BEANE & CO.
NO. 21 CORNHILL.
1849.

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
The Last Book of the Bible,	541
The Religion of Sentiment,	553
Meeting of the Music Teachers' Institute,	556
Repentance in the Church,	561
Review:	
The Fall. By S. K. Lothrop,	566
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Rev. John Pierce, D. D.,	581
The Last Stride of Infidelity,	582
The Puritan and his Daughter,	582
President Hitchcock's Lectures,	583
Valediction,	584
Ecclesiastical List,	584

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

The Publishers have found by two years' costly experience, that the work cannot be afforded to clergymen, more than to others, at less than the full subscription price; and, therefore, after the present volume is closed, it will be furnished to ALL subscribers at two dollars per annum. We hope that this change, which is made from necessity, and not from inclination, will meet with general approbation.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

JOHN V. BEANE & CO., Publishers,
No. 21 Cornhill, Boston.

Digitized by Google

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

Vol. III. DECEMBER, 1849. No. 12.

THE LAST BOOK OF THE BIBLE.

The object of this article is, to suggest the proper light in which Christians should regard the closing book of the Bible, and to aid them in deriving increased satisfaction from its perusal.

We are about to propose no theory for interpreting this book. We have no key with which to open it. In thinking of the vast amount of learning and ingenuity expended in criticisms upon it, surpassing all that has been bestowed on any other single portion of the Bible, and feeling as much at a loss now, with regard to many of its chapters as ever, one might almost say, I have wept much, because no one of all the great and good men, who have commented upon it, has been able, to the general satisfaction of the Church of God, to open the book and loose the seals thereof.

The conclusion at which we have arrived, therefore, with regard to it is, that God, who is his own interpreter, has reserved the dark parts of the book to be explained hereafter by his providence, if it shall be found useful to do so. But in view of the inability of the wisest and best of men, thus far, to agree in explaining some portions of it, we are persuaded that the usefulness of the book does not depend on its being understood so far that we can say, This passage refers to such a king, — this to such an epoch, — this to such a power. On the contrary, it appears to us that the book would lose much of its interest, and a great part of its influence over the imagination, and thus upon the feelings, were we able with certainty to say, This passage means Antiochus Epiphanes. This refers to the Guelphs and Ghibellines. This to the partition of the Roman Empire. It may be, that these pas-

Digitized by Google

sages do thus refer to the men and things here specified; but it is beyond a question, that the power of the book is greatly enhanced by the uncertainty as to the way in which its allusions are to be interpreted; — uncertainty, to which the scores of conflicting commentators are a cloud of witnesses.

It is enough for the plain and humble believer, in reading this book, to know, for example, that, in times to come, certain powers will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them. Who these powers are, is a question which it would not help his devotional feelings if he could determine. That the Lamb will overcome them, is all which is essential to his faith and comfort; and this assurance of his victories, come when and where they may, is sufficient to excite his worship of Him who is Lord of lords, and King of kings.

So with regard to events which are past. It would not make the Christian believer more devout, to know who are meant by the "two witnesses." A great object is answered by that seemingly allegorical representation, in making the reader understand that witnesses for God and his truth have been, and will be, slain; but that truth crushed to the earth will rise again. Whether, now, as some say, this passage is retrospective, and these witnesses were Moses and Aaron, Elijah and Elisha, or the seventy disciples who went forth "two and two," or whether they were the Waldenses and Albigenses, the Lollards in England and the Bohemians, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who will decide for us? If it were essential to the usefulness of the prophecy, that men should at some time know definitely who are meant by the two witnesses, we may suppose that history would have made it plain. But the want of definiteness in the passage, and fixedness to one particular event, has made it a source of great comfort to the afflicted people of God in different ages. They who lived during the earlier persecutions, no doubt, thought that they saw the "two witnesses" successively in every city where persecution raged; those later saints, the Huguenots, whose bones lay "scattered on the Alpine mountains cold," were sure that they were the two witnesses; while the Puritans and Protestants of England and Holland, were equally sure that the passage referred to them. While persecutions continue in the earth, the passage will not cease to be used for comfort and consolation, by any who are in bonds for the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

Digitized by Google

Such a view of the Apocalypse will, of course, seem absurd to those in whose hands it is like a dissected wooden map, every piece of which is cut out with such curvatures and indentations, that it will fit one place only. If the wise and good men who have prayed and toiled over this book, had approached in any measure to an agreement as to the references in all the prophetic parts of it, we might, in modesty, consent to be "shut up unto the faith" of their interpretation. But, as we say that providence interprets prophecy, so there seems to be a providence in the diversity, and, in truth, variance, of views among good men, in attempting to explain some of the mysteries of this book; for the effect is, to make the book extend its influence much further than if any one had solved its enigmas, and men had dismissed it from their minds, like a Sphynx's riddle when its solution is once made public.

These remarks apply with equal force to the discussion which prevails at the present time respecting the book, and in which other questions about its interpretation seem to be absorbed, viz.: What parts of the book have been fulfilled, and which of them refer to things yet future? Learned men disagree as much on this point, as men ever did with regard to the question, Who was Antipas, the faithful martyr? Or, what are the seven lamps, and the seven spirits of God? Serious and important questions, relating to the millennium, are involved in this discussion; but, inasmuch as the secret purposes of God are not our rule of duty, judicious Christians generally will labor for the extension of the gospel, at home and abroad; and leave the question, when and in what manner, the kingdom of Christ will be brought to a completion.

Is it not a great mistake, to believe and teach, that every thing in the Bible must in every way be explained; and that every thing was intended to be deciphered, at some time, in every feature, with unequivocal interpretation? Ezekiel's vision of the wheel, in the view of some, must be translated; they have no rest in their spirits, till they determine the explicit meaning of that sublime and fiery apparition. It never seems to be admitted by them, that some images in the Scriptures were merely for the sake of impression; and that they fulfilled their design, when they struck the mind of the seer with awe; and insured a suitable representation of the vision to others, by rousing and affecting his

Digitized by Google

mind. Some parts of the Revelation may have had no other purpose than this. Indeed, if, as we generally believe, parts of the book relate to things beyond time, there may have been the purpose in the mysterious appearances which passed before the mind of John, merely to excite the faith and hope of believers in all coming years, by giving them glimpses of future triumphs and of endless blessedness; while there was no design that any man should be able, till the fulfilment of all things in the book, to affix a certain interpretation to those appearances, beyond their general object to impress the mind. In accordance with this indistinctness in things confessedly beyond time, some events belonging to this world may have partaken of the same brilliant indistinctness to the eye of John, lying as they do along the same line of vision.

In our abhorrence of papal mysticism, and in our disgust at the allegorical interpretations of Origen and his imitators, we are in danger of passing to the opposite extreme, of compelling every thing in the Bible to take and bear a descriptive label. When doctrinal truth is evidently the design of the passage, all the implements and agents of the most severe analysis may properly be employed upon it; but when the passage is evidently symbolical, there are some cases in which the attempt to give one definite and exclusive meaning to it is like translating the gorgeous shapes and colors of the clouds at sunset. We will illustrate our meaning; for we would not be understood as attempting to throw an air of mystery over the whole Apocalypse. We only insist, that there are some things in it whose power and interest do not depend on being minutely explained or understood. Who, for example, would be so venturesome as to tell us precisely the appearance of that celestial presence which, John says, was to look upon "like a jasper and a sardine stone?" Mineralogy does well to be silent before such a passage. Theology should cover her face, like the cherubim, instead of exacting a precise and definite meaning from some of the apocalyptic descriptions. The description of the personal appearance of the Son of Man, in the first chapter, is another illustration. We venture to say, no one ever had a definite conception of it from that description, any further than that the appearance was awfully sublime.

Yet, there are multitudes of images and symbols which cannot possibly convey more than one impression. "A Lamb as it had been slain," the throne resting on the four living creatures, each

Digitized by Google

the head of his species, indicating the power and majesty of the throne, celestial armies led by the Faithful and True, the many crowns upon his head, and other symbols which might be named, suggest to every reader the same thing. But when we come to the opening of the seals, and the emptying of the vials, and to the little book sweet and bitter, and to the woman clothed with the sun, and her man-child, and to the millstone sunk by the angel in the flood, we are at a loss in explaining them, except in a most general way. We find no concurrence of views among commentators, with respect to specific numbers, dates, and persons referred to in some of the symbols. Every intelligent reader, however, will have his own explanation of them, according to the theory which he may have adopted in the interpretation of the book, but he cannot be sure that his neighbor will agree with him in it. To the vast majority of our church members, much of the Apocalypse is in many of its parts mysterious; still they derive from the book, as a whole, as much spiritual profit as from any book of the Bible. Indeed, the mysteries of the book give a preternatural interest and power to the whole. The natural love of that which is superhuman, gratified as it is by the sublime and awful figures, which appear at one time in bold relief, and again in distant and shaded forms, draws children and men, and, no less than others, the aged Christian, towards the book with a strong attraction. As young children read the Pilgrim's Progress with intense interest, while as yet they do not understand many of the allusions in it, so the Christian is impressed with this book of Revelation. There is enough of the marvellous to excite curiosity and wonder, and more than enough to gratify the devotional feelings.

Then, some will say, you favor the maxim, that ignorance is the mother of devotion. If the previous remarks do not sufficiently answer this objection, it may be added, that the ignorance which is the natural consequence of our inferior condition compared with the celestial world, does necessarily lead a pious mind to devotion. We do not worship that which is on a level with us, or beneath us. Our incapacity to comprehend, or to understand, many divine things, is the fruitful mother of devotion, and will be so forever. That day of our calamity will never come, when there will be nothing more in God to excite wonder, or when he will cease to be past finding out. We should all be glad to know the meaning of every seal, and vial, and woe, in the Apocalypse;

Digitized by Google

not a few learned men have felt sure that they could explain them; many of us have examined their theories, but we find ourselves often perplexed to know which theory is true. Our conclusion is, that there are some things in the Apocalypse, which it was not the design of the Spirit that men should at present interpret with certainty; and at the same time, we believe that this obscurity is only partial, and is not unfavorable to the spiritual objects of the book.

The view now advanced, that parts of the Apocalypse were not intended to be at once and explicitly understood, is by no means novel. It is sanctioned by great names. Scaliger said, that Calvin was wise, because he did not write upon the Revelation. Dr. Whitby says: "I have neither sufficient reading, nor judgment, to discern the intendment of the prophecies contained in that book." These men were never suspected of want of due reverence for the Scriptures, or of incompetency. Those distinguished scholars and devotedly pious men, who have written with such learning and ability on the Apocalypse, have made the world their debtors, in two things; first, for explaining the language, and the meaning of the symbols in the book; and secondly, for making us feel sure, that unity of belief, as to the meaning of some parts of the Apocalypse, is at present impossible, and thus relieving us from fruitless attempts to understand them.

It may be said, that if this view of the Apocalypse be correct, and if we cannot understand the whole of it, so far it is improperly called Apocalypse, or Revelation. Michaelis dwells upon this objection. But it has been very properly observed, that "the author might call that a revelation which was communicated to him in an extraordinary manner, though he had received it, and was to represent it, in a figurative and emblematic style." Daniel had a revelation, when he said, "I heard, but I understood not." It would lead us too far into the discussion of the nature of prophecy, to consider this objection more fully; we will only refer to an instance of obscurity in the Saviour's words, at the time when, in the presence of the High Priest, he was asserting himself to be the Son of the Highest, which will illustrate, in part, the kind and degree of obscurity which we feel belongs to the Apocalypse. "Jesus said unto him: Thou hast said, (viz., that which I am, the Christ, the Son of God.) Nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Here

Digitized by Google

the announcement is made, of the Saviour's second coming; the impression upon the High Priest was great, so that he performed that most unusual act, of rending his clothes, as a sign of horror at the alleged blasphemy. But the High Priest, probably, had no definite impression, and it was not intended that he should have any definite impression, with regard to the Saviour's second coming. So in the Apocalypse, our minds are deeply affected with certain truths and expectations, while no man has ever been able to satisfy us, nor can we satisfy ourselves, with regard to the men, the places, the events, the times, referred to in some of the passages. We do not believe that an accurate, or a certain knowledge of details, was the great intention of the prophecy; the object being, as we think, to fill the mind with expectation, hope, fear, caution, joy; and afterward, when the things should come to pass, with a confirmed confidence in the faithfulness of God. This is the view generally taken of the object of all prophecy.

We now turn to that view of the Revelation which the pious and humble believer should take of this important and interesting portion of the inspired Word of God. As to its inspiration, even Dr. Priestley says, that he thinks it impossible for any intelligent and candid reader not to be impressed with the peculiar dignity and sublimity of its composition, superior to that of any writing whatever; nor does he think that any one can resist the conviction, that, considering the age in which it appeared, it could only have been written by a person divinely inspired.

One of the most interesting things connected with this part of the inspired Word of God, and one which is suited to give it, and we believe does give it, a peculiar interest to the children of God, is, that it is the last book of the Bible.

It is true that it was written last, and therefore it holds the proper place as the closing portion of the inspired volume. But while no argument can be constructed to prove a supernatural design that this book, rather than the Epistles of the same author, should close the sacred canon, they who believe in the plenary inspiration of Scripture, will recognise at least a providential purpose and arrangement in placing such a book at the end of the sacred Word. The Apostle is commanded, at the opening of the book, to write "the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." He receives and records the Saviour's messages to seven Christian Churches. These Churches, in the variety of

Digitized by Google

their circumstances and characters, gave occasion for the largest variety of reproof, admonition, and encouragement; and thus, as Christian Churches, were designed to be, in future, the sources of influence in the conversion and sanctification of men. Thus those messages to the seven Churches of Asia, became an appropriate and important part of a book which was to be the last communication of the Saviour to the world, previous to his final appearing. In those messages of Christ, believers, and especially Christian Churches, hear what the Spirit would say to them; their constancy is commended, their zeal approved, their heresies are denounced, their backslidings chided, and the utmost variety of illustration is employed in setting forth the future happiness of those who shall be found faithful. On days of fasting and prayer observed by churches, there is no portion of the Bible to which pastors and Christians more naturally turn for spiritual instruction, than to the first chapters of the Apocalypse. We feel irresistibly, that this was so designed. Leviticus, and the Epistle to the Hebrews are not more appropriate to their end, than these chapters were to constitute a part in the last book of the Bible.

After these things, "a door was opened in Heaven." A throne was set there, "and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was, to look upon, like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." The white-robed elders, the mingled lightnings, thunders, and voices, the lamps burning before the throne, the throne supported by four living things, each the head of a race in the animal kingdom, and then the chorus of praise, and the acts of reverent worship by the heavenly hosts, all are intended to heighten and assist our conceptions of Heaven. Yet who will take a single feature of that emblazoned imagery, and venture to give to it a confident interpretation, any further than its meaning obviously strikes the mind? What painter would dare to put that scenery on canvass? Who would not feel offended if he did? The grand effect of the whole is, to fill us with new thoughts of Heaven. It is as though, when this book was written, the weary race of men had come to a place in their earthly pilgrimage, where some far-seeing eye descried the indistinct shapes of the celestial world, not sufficiently defined to gratify curiosity, but such as to excite courage and hope, and to make the children of God, in all future time, look upward with assurance of final victory and reward.

Digitized by Google

We have never sympathized with that mode of interpreting the Apocalypse, which represents it somewhat as the pot of manna in the ark, whose significancy and interest consisted only in its historical nature, its reference to something past. We believe that every part of the Apocalypse is useful, even at the present day; and was intended to be so, as much as any other part of the Bible. It is not like an aloe which has bloomed, and cannot bloom again, within the life-time of the human race. It is rather like the tree of life, with twelve manner of fruits, and which yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. For there is not, at the present day, a political commotion, or revolution, but the Church of God may be seen turning the leaves of that book; and though unable to say what chapter and verse refer to the passing event, yet animated by the triumphal marches and songs of the heavenly armies, and the sight of Christ at their head, receiving new assurance that he whose right it is, will reign, and the dominion be given to his saints.

We should be satisfied to place in the hands of the humble and pious reader of this book, the following guide, which we believe will suffice to make him acquainted with the main design of the Revelation.

1. The messages of Christ to the seven Churches of Asia, are to be regarded as his last instructions to Christian Churches in all ages of the world, and should be read by pastors and Churches accordingly. 2. Much of the remaining part of the book is designed to encourage the people of God, with the assurance that error, and superstition, and oppression, and whatever vexes the Church, will be destroyed; and that the Church will be saved from the hand of her enemies, and be exalted to incomparable excellence and glory in the world to come. 3. There is to be a long period on earth, during which religion is universally to prevail. 4. The final object of the book is to set forth future and everlasting happiness and misery, as the portion of men according to their deeds. Language faints and fails in the effort to depict the scenes of heavenly bliss; it is equally awe-struck in its delineations of future woe. No part of the Word of God gives us more affecting views of future retribution, than the closing chapters of the Apocalypse.

If, in addition to this short and simple analysis, it be required that we give a key to the meaning of the book in detail, for exam-

Digitized by Google

ple, that we point out the meaning of the woman and her man-child, and fix the time of the battle of Armageddon, or of the seventh trumpet, we must plead ignorance. While the whole book is intended to be at some time perfectly understood, we take the ground that the object of the book is not merely to give information, but to make impressions; and those impressions are in some instances, secured better by a degree of obscurity as to the dates, the persons of the drama, and the events referred to in the book.

One thing cannot fail to interest the pious reader, as a providential arrangement, in placing this book at the close of the sacred canon. It is probable that readers generally regard the threatening against those who add to, or take from, "the words which are written in this book," as applicable to the whole volume of Scripture. Though to the mind of some German critic, who looks at the books of the Bible as so many separate productions, this is absurd, the believer in plenary inspiration, and in the providence of God with regard to the canon of Scripture, cannot resist the feeling that the Holy Ghost had a design in placing that caution and threatening at the close of the last book in the Bible, rather than at the close of the Pentateuch, or the Gospels. There is a fair constructive application of those words to the whole volume of Scripture. This remark will be regarded as destitute of critical and literary propriety, by some who reject every thing like double sense in the interpretation of the Scriptures, and who do not feel, as Lord Bacon says, that they have a "germinant meaning." We believe that they have; and while we are as far as any from the fanciful methods of interpretation on the part of the allegorizers, we do believe that the Word of God was intended to apply in every possible circumstance and event of life; and that the words of David in the nineteenth Psalm, are as true of the Bible as of the sun: "There is nothing hid from the heat thereof." We feel at liberty, in reading the last chapter of the Apocalypse, to feel that it was intended to be the peroration of the Word of God; that the last chapter of Revelation was meant to be the last chapter of the Bible.

We commend this wonderful book to the re-perusal of our Christian friends; indeed, to all, of every character and age. Its partial obscurity, and the feeling that in some places it is to them, at present, a sealed book with regard to certain details,

Digitized by Google

should not deter them from reading it. They will read it, we believe, with more pleasure, if they take it up with the understanding, that they are not required nor expected to solve the vast questions which commentators have raised with regard to it. As we might look from the shore upon a tempest at sea, the surf mountain high, the ships distressed and wrecked, and hear the howl of the blast, and see the heavens, air, and sea commingled in the storm, and yet be ignorant of the name and nation of that ship which we perceive dashing to pieces on the rocks, and of the hour when the storm began, or when it will cease, so would we read parts of the Apocalypse; and our ignorance of the time, the persons, the precise event, signified in any particular chapter, and what nation or power that is, which is represented as driving headlong to destruction, should not detract from the impression of the might, and the avenging justice of God. We do not ask to know when that angel will descend from Heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. Nor do we care to ask the meaning of the number of the beast, nor whether the Roman letters which stand for 666, make the word Lateinos, and indicate the seat of the Beast. We are satisfied with knowing that his rise was noted by the all-seeing eye, and that the number of his months is with God. In times past, some of us have read the Apocalypse with Newton, Faber, and others in our minds, and have tried to test the accuracy of their dates, and theories of explanation. We have grown older, and in the mean time, we hope, in this respect at least, a little wiser. We read the Apocalypse now somewhat as we witness a thunder-storm, and look at a rainbow, without making our interest depend wholly on knowing where the lightning struck, how far distant the cloud is, as indicated by the number of seconds between the flash and the peal, or on being able to determine between what capes or hills the rainbow spans the horizon, or with what radius it could be measured. We would read the Apocalypse more as Christians should, — more as heirs of heaven; and less as critics, or literary men.

We were much interested not long since, on reading the last chapter, in noticing one thing which had always before escaped our observation. We refer to it as an illustration of the spiritual power and interest of the book, when read without any system in the mind to be verified or disputed. "In the midst of the street

Digitized by Google

of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life." In the first place, it appears from these words, that a single isolated tree is not meant, but a species of tree, for the tree was on either side of the river. Secondly, the occurrence of trees in the midst of the streets of Heaven, is the point to which we alluded, and this suggests the most interesting reflections. We are not ignorant that some, commenting on this passage, have laid down the plan of the New Jerusalem with great exactness and angularity. They tell us that the river runs through the midst of the street; and that the two banks of the river are lined, each with a row of trees. They remind us of Amsterdam. We prefer to think, that these trees are not disposed in such merely convenient position; but that they stand in groves, and are in the midst of the street, not necessarily following the course of the river, like old willows. Trees in the streets of Heaven! Then of course there are no burdens there, to be drawn from place to place. Wings there are for wheels. Instead of labor, and the busy throng of anxious men, shade and repose are in the streets of Heaven; but here streets are for toil, for funerals. Some of our friends, our children, repose in that shade; labor, care, sorrow, with them are passed away; and while this dim Apocalypse is the only window through which we see, darkly, the outlines of heavenly beauty and glory, they have not only the full vision of God, but revelations of future and eternal things which no mortal has ever conceived. To them, in their advancing knowledge, are continually addressed those words of the angel to John: "Come up hither." They are carried away to points of higher and still higher vision, till earth and time, with their riches, and honors, and pleasures, and sorrows, are the merest trifles. If we are on the road which they travelled, soon with them we shall stand on their high places.

Some of the closing words of the Revelation make us feel as we do on listening to a bell in a country village, tolling for evening worship, while the people are seen slowly entering the house of prayer, and every stroke is ready to be the last. We love the calm, solemn sound of these words, which are the last written appeal which God will make to men: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth, say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Digitized by Google

THE RELIGION OF SENTIMENT.

An author, speaking of a celebrated Scotsman, says: "The main current of his soul is rapt and religious." In proof of this, the following incident is given. "He was crossing the hills from St. Mary's Loch to Moffat. It was a misty morning; but, as he ascended, the mist began to break into columns before the radiant finger of the sun. His feelings became too much excited for silence, and he began to speak, and from speaking he began to pray; and prayed aloud and alone for thirty miles, in the misty morning." Yet, from what is known of this same traveller, it is hard to believe that the prayer thirty miles long arose from any deeper or more holy feelings, than any man of a sensitive and poetic temperament might have, under the influence of the beautiful and the sublime in nature.

An American at Rome, describing the works of a distinguished painter, tells us, that "his studio is open to visitors on Sundays, for an hour in the afternoon, and each of his pictures preaches an eloquent sermon." Now, we are just puritanical enough to inquire, Of what do these pictures preach? To what part of man's nature are these "eloquent sermons" addressed?

The feelings manifested in these instances, we take the liberty to call the religion of sentiment; meaning, by this name, a peculiar class of emotions which arise in the soul, under a culture adapted to produce them. They are not all of one kind, but admit of many varieties, according to the character and degree of cultivation, of those who cherish them; and according to the nature of the objects, in view of which they arise. These emotions belong, no doubt, to the intellect and the sensibilities; but, they seem to many, to have moral elements which strictly entitle them to be called religious. It is because they are "falsely so called," that they demand attention. But, how shall we describe the religion of sentiment? It has no well-defined principles, and it fears specific truths and definite duties in religion. It talks of the worship of God, and the practice of virtue; but when you press the question, "What man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man?" it is silent; or takes refuge in words of such ambiguity, that their meaning cannot be compressed into any intelligible propositions. Upon the most rigid

Digitized by Google

cross-questioning, the religion of sentiment cannot be brought to "define its position" in the moral world. It can shew no chart of the Christian voyage, no fixed meridians, no polar star. Of course, we shall expect to see this religion manifesting a reckless liberality. Its latitudinarian spirit is quite happily embodied in a stanza of Pope's "Universal Prayer:"

> "Father of all, in every age,
> In every clime, adored;
> By saint, by savage, and by sage,
> Jehovah, Jove, or Lord."

To what an accommodating width this stretches the circle of God's true worshippers! The imagination may picture to the heart its idol; and all worship addressed to it, God will regard as intended for himself! The Greek praying to Jupiter, the Hindoo offering to Vishnu, and the Christian singing the praises of Jehovah, are all worshipping the same being, and it matters not by what name their deity is called.

A religion of such comprehensiveness would be pained to hear Christ say to the Samaritans: "Ye worship ye know not what." It could have no sympathy with that apostolic exclusiveness which, proclaiming salvation only by Jesus Christ, declares, that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Nor does the religion of sentiment find any difficulty in accommodating itself to any form of religious service. It is at home in a Protestant church, if discrimination in doctrine and earnestness of spirit are not there. In a Catholic cathedral, without a discord, it chimes in with the "Ora pro nobis," addressed to the Virgin. In a Jewish synagogue, it is not offended at a well-chanted prayer for the *first* advent of the Messiah. And even in a Mahometan mosque, it breathes a silent Amen, when the true Moslem bows toward Mecca, saying: "There is no God but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

A good opinion of human nature, is also a leading characteristic of this religion. Speak of mankind as depraved and lost, "alienated from the life of God," "under the curse of the law," needing not only good examples and a careful education, but the "washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," and the religion of sentiment is shocked. It sighs over such "groans

Digitized by Google

of a gloomy theology." It is astonished that these "Genevan dogmas" find advocates and believers in an enlightened age.

Such are some of the features of the religion of sentiment. A religion, in some of its elements and varieties, common to every age of the world, and to almost every people; but most powerful to deceive and flatter the heart, where civilization has tamed the fiercer passions of the soul, and a refined education has made delicate its sensibilities. This religion meets the student in the classic poem. The lady finds it pervading the fashionable serials, and the gilded annual intended for a Christmas or New Year's present. It claims a stanza, (generally the last,) in the song that enlivens the evening party; it adds one to the variety of subjects skimmed over by the magazines, which adorn the centre-table. Many English writers know how to give the religion of sentiment attractive charms; but in the German of Schiller, and of Jean Paul, few may hope to withstand its fascination. For, unless they are well read in human nature, and "the things of God," it will seem to them that such beautiful sentiments, so beautifully expressed, must be "of the nature of true holiness."

But it is time to inquire what such a religion can do for man, as he is in real life? What did it do for Athens? It reared the columns of the Parthenon,—it erected many an altar; yet left there the vilest passions of man unchecked, and rendered the gospel preached by Paul, a theme for mockery. It could, indeed, say with Aratus:

"For we are also his offspring;"

but it had no ear for truths pertaining to "Jesus and the resurrection."

And how does it now meet the sinner's necessities? It may come to him with a charming moral philosophy, or a beautiful essay on the virtues that are "lovely and of good report;" but, it cannot turn the wanderer "from the error of his ways;" for, it never meets him with an open Bible and an unveiled cross. It may bend the knee, and teach the lips phrases of piety; but never can it bow the soul, or move the heart to say,—"Father, thy will be done!" It speaks not of "Christ, the wisdom of God, and the power of God." It is a religion that looks prettily in the poet's corner of a newspaper, or in the embellished keepsake. It will help an orator to round a period gracefully, or cap

Digitized by Google

a climax with effect. It gives finish to a scholar's theme, and kindles into quite a glow, the closing sentences of a letter to a friend. It adds dignity to a message to Congress, and lends a becoming air of seriousness to a proclamation for Thanksgiving. But it is powerless to quicken one who is "dead in trespasses and sins," and cannot cause him to "walk in newness of life." For, it has never contemplated the Eternal One as sovereign; just and holy, as well as good and merciful; whose justice in the punishment of sin, is only a manifestation of his goodness, which can no more be separated from it, than light from the sun. Nor has this religion any true knowledge of a mediating and atoning High Priest, who "offered up himself, the propitiation for our sins." It has never heard of a converting and sanctifying Holy Spirit. A religion wanting in these life-giving elements, though it may be polished and brilliant as ice, like the ice, must also be slippery and cold.

As a development of cultivated natural emotion, this religion may ornament the character, and decorate social life; but let not the miseries of man be mocked, by calling it Christianity. The emotions it demands are no more like holiness of heart,— no more depend on faith,— than those experienced when viewing the Falls of Niagara, or the fleecy clouds of an autumnal evening, as they are swept over the disk of the moon. As a religion, can it even be called beautiful? It may be the religion of beauty; but how different from the beauty of religion! To one who has seen "the glories of the cross," the religion of sentiment, viewed as religion, exhibits only "the beauty that hovers round decay," the beauty of phosphorescent wood, dependent upon darkness for its effect.

MEETING OF THE MUSIC TEACHERS' INSTITUTE.

This is the sixteenth annual meeting of the Association of Teachers of Vocal Music, held in Boston. It commenced on Monday, October eighth, and closed on Saturday of the same week. Whoever, without having observed the annual progress of this important Institution, gave attendance at the meetings of this year, must have been delighted and surprised. They gave proof of great progress in musical taste and skill, which must be attributed mainly to this Institute and its able professors.

Digitized by Google

With us it has always been a question, whether the influences of climate, and an unpoetic style of life, would not prevent a high musical development in, at least, the northern section of the Republic. Our scepticism, however, was much shaken by many things that met our eyes and ears at those meetings. Not that we heard from American lips either the rich, majestic bass of Rossi, or the clear, elastic, uncorporeal breathings of some Italian soprano singers. We surely live too near the cave of old Æolus for that. But the choral singing was equal to any we remember to have heard in England or Italy, if the Pope's choir is excepted. The American voice admits of cultivation to a very high degree. And a soul in New England may get far enough from the magic power of the dollar, to feel and utter genuine music. Adopted foreigners contributed greatly to the excellence of the services; but they were not singular in their excellence, nor did they claim to be "foremost among equals." There is in our native citizens, good taste, and a true musical sentiment, the cultivation of which is peculiarly important to us, as an active and practical people. The love and cultivation of music under right influences, will tend to soften the natural asperities of our national character, and to improve the style of our address and intercourse.

We have had the pleasure of hearing the instructions of the "People's Teacher," in Paris; but have never heard musical instructions to classes, so judicious, clear, and important, as those given at the Institute. We have heard church music in England, France, Germany, and in the land of song itself; but we have never heard church music so appropriately and effectively sung, as in Boston. Our testimony is at least disinterested, whether the judgment it expresses be correct or not.

Of the instrumental performances, perhaps none are competent to speak with authority, but the initiated. Of the vocal performances, however, we claim that, in certain respects, the ear not trained in the schools, may form the most correct judgment. Theologians often condemn a sermon which "the common people heard gladly" and profitably. We were satisfied with the precision, modesty, and appropriateness, with which all the accompaniments were performed. We ask of the organist, that he blow not away the gentlest note of the human voice, nor weigh down that which he should sustain. We ask of the orchestra, that it

Digitized by Google

be not brassy, nor windy, nor scraping; but sweetly breathe into us the gentler sentiments of music; and when it creates thunder, let not the creaking of the machinery, the mere noise of sound be heard. So they did on the occasion we speak of, and we thank them for it.

From six hundred to a thousand performers were present at the several concerts given. The exercises were of three kinds: Instruction in sacred music and psalmody, with illustrative exercises; glee singing; and concerts.

The lectures and exercises were given by Professors Mason and Webb; and they were invaluable to the teachers and students of music. We frequently wished that every clergyman in the land could have heard the remarks made on psalmody, the selection of tunes, and musical expression. The praises of God are acknowledged to be a very important part of the services of the sanctuary. But the value of those services depends greatly on several things which ministers do not yet sufficiently appreciate. Some of these they would have discovered for themselves, and made their own "inferences and applications," had they been present.

The minister is interested in the choice and reading of the hymn; in the tune selected for singing it; in the manner of its performance; and in his own example as a man, humble, devout, earnest, in the praises of the most high God; and not as one exempt from that sublime service, or called to do sundry more important things, while the people are attending to that. There was much said on the need of discrimination between the various sentiments and objects of the different hymns, which are of supreme importance to men who intend to sing "with the spirit and the understanding."

The glee-singing we did not attend. But we are contented to know, that the Teachers' Institute would admit nothing inconsistent with the sacred character of the chorister's profession and employments.

The concerts were grand, for this Western Hemisphere. To us the climax was Mozart's twelfth mass. What will our Roman Catholic neighbors say to this confession? We make it in the ear of their priesthood; we love Mozart's Mass. And yet our confession must not stop there. Our difficulties with the fine arts are many. They may arise from ignorance or prejudice;

Digitized by Google

but there they are. How are the fine arts to flourish in the papal style, in a country whose institutions, literature, social life, and individual character, are so far moulded by Puritanism? It is certainly a question that may suggest some important reflections. There are points of collision which awaken our solicitude. Perhaps no better illustration can be given than in this magnificent mass. We then inquire, Is it an act of worship, or an exhibition? If the former, then it seems to us, a mind must be in a very peculiar frame, to repeat fifty times in one hour, "Kyrie, eleison; Lord, have mercy." If any person were to repeat it twenty times in a public prayer, it would sound most strangely; it would be wrong. And why would this be offensive to every ear? Because it would be that "vain repetition" which our Lord has condemned. We can indeed excuse Mozart, and even commend him, for turning this important prayer over so often, in such varied forms, when we regard him as alone in his study, giving utterance to his own penitential feelings, and merely imagining that a hundred voices were giving utterance to his own struggling spirit. But when in reality, a hundred people rise to sing such a prayer, however we may charitably believe that they feel it sufficiently to utter it once or twice, or even many times, yet by all the laws of rhetoric and music, what can justify a constant repetition of the same idea fifty times, without expressing any climax of emotion? Considered as an appeal to the Searcher of hearts, may we not question, Whether it is reverential thus to repeat two words in a public prayer?

If, however, the performance of the mass be considered an exhibition, then we must be allowed to question the propriety of making a theatrical display of penitential feelings. This is very puritanical; and as Puritans we utter it. Says the venerable John Newton: "If it could be reasonably hoped that the performers, and the company assembled to hear the music, (of Handel's Messiah, performed in Westminster Abbey,) or the greater part of them, were capable of entering into the spirit of the subject, I will readily allow that the *Messiah*, executed in so masterly a manner, by persons whose hearts, as well as their voices and instruments, were tuned to the grateful emotions of an audience duly affected with a sense of their obligations to his love, might afford one of the highest and noblest gratifications of which we are capable in the present life." But if it be avowed, as we

Digitized by Google

now are supposing, that the very object of singing the mass, is to afford a musical entertainment, we can never assent to its propriety.

As a work of art, the performance by the Institute was worthy of the highest commendation.

And perhaps we may be allowed to express our orthodox satisfaction with the manner in which the composer has framed that part of the service, where the worshipper announces his belief. It is a splendid musical refutation of all the "liberalism" of our infected district. It utters forth with such bold, manly, Christian firmness, — CREDO! CREDO! Not a shred of the delicate scrupulosity which some refined spirits have experienced in declaring what they know, lest somebody else should know that he knows just the contrary to be true. The bass of the "Credo" rolls forth like the very thunderings of Paul on Mar's hill; like his martyr-sayings: "I know in whom I have believed;" "I am not ashamed of the gospel;" "I glory in the cross."

Sacred music is yet in a transition period. The choir-singing has corrected many of the intolerable abuses and perversions which disgraced the worship of God. But we need to reach another stage, in which the full power of the choir shall be employed, sometimes alone, sometimes with the congregation. And many of the remarks made by Professor Mason on the rules to be observed in selecting congregational tunes, threw a most satisfactory light over this difficult subject. We allude to his observations on the compass and rhythm of the tune. He restricts the range to the octave within the D's; and rejects all complex movement, all syncopation, and all excessive variety in the length of notes, requiring great delicacy of time-keeping to do them justice. This makes the case plain. Congregations can sing in time, tune, and expression, if these points be observed in the selection of the music.

It has often seemed to us very desirable to have assemblies of the people for the purpose of attending to sacred music. Perhaps one or two in a season might be sufficient. The object of the meeting should be, to have the pastor select a variety of hymns; and on each one, as it is announced to be sung, let him first make remarks, leading the attention of the assembly to the subject, commenting on phrases, describing the class of emotions, thoughts, or purposes, each verse may be designed to express.

Digitized by Google

Let the chorister then make remarks upon the character of the tune to which he sets it, and point out the common faults in singing that tune. As an illustration of our meaning, all the triple time tunes are drawled and dragged by our congregations. Mear is in triple-time; so is Balerma. But to an ear that appreciates time and rhythm as vital elements of music; the ordinary utterance of them is extremely painful. So we might speak of the peculiarities of Hebron, and similar tunes. Now, as musical cultivation will advance in the community, we ought to avoid inflicting needless pain on any who attend on the services of the Lord's house. Such meetings, held once or twice in every season, and oftener if desired, would certainly do much to give increased efficiency to our church music.

We would recommend clergymen to make their arrangements to attend the morning meetings of the Institute hereafter. They would find themselves instructed, and aided in an important part of their duties.

REPENTANCE IN THE CHURCH.

"REPENT, and do the first works," is a part of our Lord's address to the angel of the Church of Ephesus. It it a seasonable counsel; nay, a positive command to many churches, and many Christians, at this time. The repentance of a Christian is, in some respects, different from that of an unbeliever. In other words, the first act of repentance differs, in several of its features, from every subsequent repetition of that act. The first may have more disturbance of the sensibilities, but generally has less clearness of vision, if not less thoroughness of volition. The exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the extent of evil in the heart, are more fully discovered after believing in Christ, than before. The novelty of the subject has ceased, and the despair of unbelief has passed away; but there is a clearer apprehension of the perverseness of the heart, and a more abasing discovery of its wilful wickedness, of its ingratitude, selfishness, pride, and self-will, its tendency to depart from God, and to make a god of created things.

Digitized by Google

These subsequent exercises of repentance are of two kinds. Some of them are gentle, gradual, and progressive in depth and strength. Others are sudden and powerful, effecting great revolutions in the character and life. The more sudden and convulsive forms of repentance in Christians usually follow either long declensions, or enormous sins.

Of the gradual kind, specimens may be found in all religious biographies, and in the penitential psalms of Scripture. For an uninspired instance we may refer to the diary of William Wilberforce. He says: "When I look back upon my past life, and review it, comparing especially the numerous, almost innumerable, instances of God's kindness to me, with my unworthy returns, I am overwhelmed, and can with truth adopt the language of the Publican, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' It is the exceeding goodness of God to me, and the almost unequalled advantages I have enjoyed, which so fill me with humiliation and shame." To the same purport are expressions in the writings of Baxter, Martyn, Scott, Payson, and of all others whom we regard as truly spiritual.

Of the same kind is the feeling expressed in the prayers of the Psalmist: "O remember not against us former iniquities;" "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great;" and in all his humiliating acknowledgments of our common infirmity and sinfulness. Of the more sudden and transforming kind there are many exhibitions in the Scriptures. It may be seen in the case of Joseph's brethren, when their sin was suddenly brought to their view. The more ingenuous feeling was mingled, perhaps, with remorse and fear; yet there was, doubtless, in many of them a genuine repentance. There was sudden repentance, with strong emotion, in the case of David; as expressed in the fifty-first, the thirty-eighth, and other kindred Psalms. So the Church repented in the time of Ezra; so king Josiah repented at a new discovery of his own, and of the people's, sins. So the Corinthian Church was brought, by the reading of one of Paul's first letters, to a sudden and profound repentance, thus energetically described by himself in the second letter to the same church: "Behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!"

Digitized by Google

Now, it may be more desirable, psychologically considered, that repentance should never take on this vehement form. So, it may be better, physiologically considered, that no arsenic nor opium should ever enter the human body. And yet, it may still remain a fact, that judicious practitioners will continue to employ these lesser evils, for the removal of greater. We may perhaps entertain as much abstract opposition to revivals of religion, as any brother who decries them. And yet we may prefer, when the church is in a wrong spiritual condition, that she emerge from it just as suddenly as the Corinthian church did; just as vehemently, zealously, and indignantly.

We can conceive of no way of escape from the present torpid, unaggressive, formal condition of our churches, but by the door which the Lord set open to the angel of the Ephesian church in similar circumstances. He commanded him to repent, and do the first works. If any member of the church has lost the fervor of his first love, the simplicity of his early faith, the zeal and thankfulness, the humility and charity, the prayerfulness that characterized his first consecration to Christ, he must, in his mind, turn away from his present mental condition; and in his outward life, turn away from all that is the result of this inward declension. The more promptly, earnestly, fervently, and thoroughly he thus repents, the more beneficial will be the consequences. And this is what we mean by a revival of religion, regarded in its human aspects.

Now there can be no question among evangelical Christians on this point; that, however important it may be to prevent declensions in religion, yet that when a Christian has declined, he should be brought to repentance; prompt, profound, emotional, voluntary and practical.

Nor can it be doubted that we, at the present time, greatly and specially need the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit. In what manner we should labor to produce that result; in other words, what are the immediate mental and outward acts which shall be the precursors to that specific action of the Holy Spirit, is a question that may divide good men. That something ought to be done, none but a fatalist or an antinomian can question. As, however, we differ, some sincerely believing that it is expedient and necessary to employ extraordinary means to this end; and others, thinking that we should be contented with a faithful

Digitized by Google

attendance on ordinary means, let each follow his own convictions. Only let us unite strongly in the desire, that all the friends of Christ should repent, and do the first works. Let us in our secret prayers, spread the present lamentable condition of Zion before the Lord, and like our great High Priest, "with strong crying and tears," plead for the return of the Spirit. Let the preachers of the word, like John the Baptist, lift up their voices and say: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

A penitent Christian is powerful, even if his repentance be sudden; more truly powerful, if permanently penitent, with no declensions; but always powerful in proportion to the degree of his penitence. Repentance is a turning of all the faculties to oppose sin. The understanding comes to perceive how unreasonable, false, and ungodly it is; the heart to feel how unlovely, how detestable it is; the will to relinquish its most cherished forms, and to set itself in deadly antagonism to them. This is power, in a world that is altogether sinful. It is a current of the breath of heaven, going over the face of a stagnant sea, agitating its sluggish waves, and troubling its dead waters. It is a stream of the life that is in God, rushing against the current of worldly affections. And what if the two should create a storm? It would not be unlike the operations of God in nature; as, for instance, the meeting of the winds and waters that rush into such terrible embrace from the Pacific and the Atlantic Oceans, at the fatal Cape Horn.

The dread of encountering this storm, is the real, though unsuspected, reason why Christians dread repentance. The first storm is in their own hearts; for when they have sunk into a worldly state, have formed worldly habits, and entangled themselves with various worldly alliances, then to discover the evil of these, and to begin the change that an enlightened conscience demands, is dreadful. Nor does the difficulty cease there; for when the personal change is effected, and the Christian's own house is set in order, then there begins another antagonism. He has discovered the hatefulness, not only of vice, but also of sin; not only in himself, but in all other men. He sees now that worldliness is a sin; no matter what disguise it puts on; no matter how refined in its form. Having discovered its evil in himself, he sees its evil in another, and in all others. He will then in heart, be opposed to it, and shew that opposition in all natural

Digitized by Google

and prudent ways, which must produce what the seamen call a "cross-sea;" the current of the ocean running in one direction, and the wind raising a current to run in the opposite, or in an angular direction. This is the unquiet state of a revival; and here the conviction of unbelievers begins. Here, too, "a man's foes" become "those of his own household," as our Lord declared they would be. Men out of Christ, and in the world, are obliged to feel the power of this heaven-descended impulse, reaching even to them. And their consciences recognizing its divine origin and authority, prevent their putting it down with contempt. Its power thus lies in its causing a civil war in their breasts; arousing the conscience to oppose the heart, and demand its surrender to the claims of Christ.

The power of penitence is seen, too, in the preaching it produces. The repenting preacher cordially hates sin, while he loves the sinner. He will then, bear with the pressure of a resistless weight, upon the consciences of his hearers. He is not like those men who, in preaching against vice, promote wickedness; who preach against specific sins in such a way as to leave the great generic sin of ungodliness quietly entrenched in the heart; who preach against particular forms of sin, in a way that flatters every sinner who is not addicted to those forms of it. Not being in a penitent frame themselves, they cannot produce penitence in others. They may describe the vices finely, as Blair does; they may thunder against the grosser sins; even against the more popular forms of those sins, which violate the second table of the decalogue; but the great sin of having a heart alienated from God, they do not sincerely abhor, and so cannot preach against it with any power. They cannot earnestly plead with each and every unbelieving and worldly man to repent and turn to God, from a deep conviction that that man is, and ought to be, condemned and destroyed for not loving God. Penitence in the pulpit is powerful.

So is it in the prayer-meeting, and in the secret intercessions of the closet. When a child of God truly repents, then he feels the evil and the peril of the impenitent to be a dreadful reality. Every day, every hour, the immeasurable evil of their sinfulness, and their real, fearful condition are present to his view; and his prayers for them become sincere and importunate. Do not the members of our churches need to repent now?

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

THE FALL. By S. K. Lothrop. Printed for the American Unitarian Association. Boston: Wm. Crosby & H. P. Nichols, 111 Washington St. May, 1849. Pp. 17.

THIS is a tract in the series of the American Unitarian Association. It is one of the most remarkable contributions to theological science, which we have ever seen. The author is the minister of the Brattle Street Church, in this city. He has here presented to the world his views on that important and fundamental subject, the apostacy of man; and the American Unitarian Association has endorsed these views, by incorporating them in its official publications.

According to this tract, the whole world of scholars and readers, Calvinistic and Arminian, supralapsarian and sublapsarian, have misunderstood and misinterpreted the account of the first transgression, as given in the second chapter of Genesis. Mr. Lothrop will not undertake to say what is taught in this chapter; but he proposes to shew "what it does not teach." Every thing in the passage, (Gen. ii. 15–17,) relating to the moral character of Adam previous to his disobedience, he says, is contained in these words: "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

Mr. Lothrop thinks that we have all erred, in supposing that Adam was, at the time this prohibition was given, "holy and perfect,— at least, more so than his posterity." We quote his language: "From these words the popular theology gathers the idea, that Adam was now a perfect and holy man, all his desires in harmony with the will and law of God; that he was not exposed to death; and was also exempt from the necessity of labor." P. 4.

Surely, this is the general, and at the present day, we had supposed, till we read this tract, the universal belief. We have always regarded this to be the true state of the case in respect to Adam, with about the same degree of confidence with which we have always supposed that rain comes from the clouds, or that

Digitized by Google

there were two human beings at first in the garden of Eden. On reading the words above quoted, we could not refrain from asking, If the original holiness and perfection of Adam are to be questioned, what is there which can be considered as settled?

Mr. L.'s argument, however, is very simple. "If we look at the express declarations of the sixteenth verse, we find that all it teaches of the condition of Adam is, that he was ignorant of good and evil. This is necessarily and directly implied in the prohibition which forbade him to eat 'of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.' What is the condition of a being 'ignorant of good and evil?'"

He then proceeds to say, that it is difficult to form any conception of a moral being in so inferior a condition. The inference, he thinks, would be, that Adam in such an inferior state was evidently "less perfect than we are." He did not know good and evil; that is, the difference between them. Of course, some would argue, he must have been far below us in the scale of intelligent and moral existence. But Mr. L. "cannot believe these propositions, nor rest in these conclusions;" and yet he says: "*We cannot so explain the meaning of the words and interpret the passage as not to lead to them.*" In other words, the fair and obvious interpretation of Scripture leads us unavoidably to the conclusion, that Adam was in a very infantile state as to his moral nature, not knowing the difference between good and evil.

We not unfrequently meet with some speculations about Adam's condition before the fall, which represent him as holding about the same place in the scale of intelligent beings which that jelly, the echinus or star-fish, holds among the creatures of the deep. He was, according to some, in his moral state, a soft, flabby, imbecile formation, incompetent to any thing like reasoning or discrimination; a doltish, overgrown man-child. It is thought impossible that God could create a complete and perfect human being, in the full maturity of his powers. But no one doubts that the birds and beasts which were brought to Adam, were created in full maturity; or that the rivers of Eden ran as full, and were as strong, at first as ever; or that God saw that every irrational thing which he had made was good. How absurd to suppose that he did not, or could not, create man complete and perfect, without waiting for experience or time, as in our case, to perfect him. They who believe Adam to have been

Digitized by Google

our federal head cannot, of course, believe that God would place on probation a being incompetent to such a trial. Even the author of this tract shrinks from his own conclusion with regard to Adam's infantile state of mind, inasmuch as he says, We find the Most High "issuing a command, and enforcing it by a threat of punishment," which implies that he to whom it was addressed, knew the meaning of punishment, and of course, the difference between good and evil. Yet that untasted tree of the knowledge of good and evil sadly puzzles Mr. Lothrop. His wheel seems to be locked by that tree. He can neither pass on, nor go back. How Adam could know good and evil before he had eaten of that "tree of knowledge," is a mystery to him; and yet he feels that Adam must have known good from evil, or God would not have commanded and threatened him. The conclusion at which he evidently arrives, is, that we cannot prove Adam to have been more holy and perfect than we.

In addition, he proceeds to argue, that, while Adam was no better before his disobedience than we now are, he was no worse afterward; but, on the whole, decidedly better. His argument is exceedingly novel. He says: "What was the first act of Adam and Eve after partaking of the forbidden fruit? They sewed together fig-leaves, and made themselves coverings, because they perceived they were naked. So far as this act indicates any moral change in them, it is an evidence of increased modesty, and not of greater corruption and defilement." P. 7.

All, we think, must admit that this is a discovery in theological science. The world has generally supposed, that the matter of the fig-leaves was a sign of lost innocence, a confession of guilt, an expression of an indescribable desire to be screened from the eye of God, with a feeling of guilty shame, which, till that moment, was unknown to our first parents. Mr. Lothrop demurs to this conclusion. The fall, on the contrary, had improved the character of the first human pair. At their apostacy, a sense of propriety dawned upon them; they no longer behaved themselves unseemly; they took an important step towards an improved state of society, grew modest, and of course enjoyed a much higher degree of self-respect.

But Mr. Lothrop has still further proofs, that the apostacy was not, in the commonly received sense of the term, a fall, in its influence on human nature. He says: "There is nothing that

Digitized by Google

asserts or implies that man's nature became 'wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.' God cursed the serpent, but he did not curse the man or the woman. He simply told the woman, that she should conceive and bring forth children in sorrow, and be subject to her husband. He told the man, that the ground was cursed for his sake, that he should till it in labor, and eat of its fruit in sorrow, and return to it in death; but he says nothing of his nature being accursed or corrupted. He put enmity between the woman and the serpent, and their seed; but he did not put enmity between the woman and her seed and himself. Nothing is said of an utter alienation of the human heart from God, then and there beginning, and to continue in the posterity of Adam and Eve." Pp. 7, 8.

But we have not yet reached the full measure of Mr. Lothrop's belief with regard to the beneficial effects of the apostacy in Eden. He proceeds thus: "In the twenty-second verse of the third chapter, we read, — 'And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.' Here is the express declaration of God as to the consequence of eating of the forbidden tree, and the character of the change it produced. The declaration does not encourage or suggest the idea, that the moral nature of man was changed for the worse, became totally corrupt, defiled, by this act of our first parents. It says expressly, that it became 'like God' in one of his attributes. The change would seem to have been from a lower to a higher degree of intelligence; from an ignorance of good and evil to a knowledge of both. Adam became like unto God, to know good and evil. His nature was enlarged, his knowledge and discernment increased. It is directly implied, also, that, had he gone a step farther in his disobedience, and eaten of the fruit of the tree of life, he would have attained immortality in his present state. The direct language of the passage, then, instead of teaching the corruption and defilement of our nature through Adam's transgression, declares that it became more like God,— that it attained to a moral discernment which it did not possess before. Here, then, arises another inexplicable difficulty. How can an act of disobedience to God raise a being in the scale of intellectual and moral life? And yet, if Adam became like God, to know good and evil, by partaking of the forbidden fruit, how can we escape the conclusion that his disobedience did produce this result?" Pp. 8, 9.

Digitized by Google

It has occurred to us, on reading these lines, to ask, What objection the author would have made at being a tempter to our first parents? We venture to say, that Adam and Eve had no stronger inducement to disobey God in any reasonings which were presented to them, than may be found in these quotations. Prompted by his benevolent and philanthropic disposition, our friend, Mr. L., may be induced hereafter to leave his place, in search of some planet where the unsophisticated and naked inhabitants have not learned the knowledge of good and evil; and by the happy effects of the apostacy of man in "enlarging his nature," "increasing his knowledge and discernment," and in making him "like God in one of his attributes," persuade them to some act of disobedience. With this tract in his hand, he need not assume the shape of a serpent; that was cowardly in Satan, and unworthy of the truths which he uttered in the ears of Adam and Eve. Satan need not have used subtilty; if Mr. Lothrop be correct, he spoke the words of truth and soberness. Why God should curse him, and the ground, it would be difficult to say, if this tract be true. All which Satan said came literally to pass, only in the form of a much higher good than he, perhaps, anticipated. Should Mr. Lothrop, hereafter, go forth on such a mission as we have intimated, Gabriel will not warn Uzziel to keep watch for him; nor the seraphs Ithuriel and Zephon draw near to surprise and hinder him. They will have learned, if they do not already know, that Milton's Paradise Lost was founded in error, and that the apostacy was really the first step which was taken in human progress. If this tract be true, it would seem that hell must be a sort of university to the intelligent creation, and the boldest sinner most "like God in one of his attributes."

The following extracts, will shew still more fully Mr. L's views of Adam's original nature, and the effect of his transgression on himself and his posterity; together with Mr. L's mode of reasoning on the subject. The italics are in the tract.

"This obscure passage in holy writ, does not teach that Adam was perfectly righteous, indisposed to sin, less prone to evil than his posterity. Adam had but *one restriction* placed upon his freedom, but *one command* imposed, which he was especially warned not to disobey. He did disobey that one command, and thereby it is proved that his nature was *not* on a higher stand-point than human nature at the present day." P. 9.

Digitized by Google

The meaning is, that Adam's susceptibility to temptation and sin in his original state, proves that his nature was not more perfect than ours. By this reasoning, it could be proved, that angels in heaven, before their fall, were not more perfect than man "at the present day." The tract proceeds to shew still farther, that Adam was not our superior in the respect referred to.

"He was forbidden to eat of the tree which communicated the knowledge of good and evil. This directly and necessarily implies that he was previously not endowed with this knowledge. — So far as the passage teaches any thing distinctly of the moral condition of Adam at creation, it teaches that his nature was inferior to human nature at the present day, that it had not the same discernment of right and wrong that we have. Again, it does not teach, or in any way imply, that Adam's nature, or that of his posterity, became corrupted and defiled by his transgression. The only positive declaration in the passage, that bears upon this point directly, asserts that Adam became 'like God,' through eating the fruit of the forbidden tree; and to become like God, or more like God, cannot be to become more corrupted and defiled." Pp. 9, 10.

The common belief with regard to the fall of the race being thus set aside, it will be interesting to know what effect the apostacy of Adam had, in the view of our author, on mankind. He says: "The general impression made upon the mind by the whole account is, that in some way Adam lost position and favor with God by his disobedience. In that loss, we, his posterity, share; we share in some of the consequences, but not in the guilt, of his disobedience; — just as a child born of a parent who has wasted his property, beggared his family, and ruined his constitution by intemperance and licentiousness, shares in the poverty, and suffering, and sickness, that are the consequences, but does not share in the guilt of the licentious drunkard who caused them." P. 10. "An infant sleeping in its mother's arms is not at that moment a sinner before God, because, and solely because, of Adam's trangression." P. 11.

These extracts give a full view of the author's opinions respecting the human apostacy. The tract containing them is, as before stated, one of the regular publications of the American Unitarian Association. It is right to infer, in the absence of any notice to the contrary, that these views are sanctioned by Unitarians.

Digitized by Google

Our first remark with regard to them will have reference, not so much to the heretical character, as we deem it, of these opinions, as to the strange misinterpretation of certain passages of Scripture in the tract. We remember that, not long since, several articles appeared in the Christian Examiner, complaining of the decay of biblical learning among Unitarians. This tract, we believe, was not then written.

The author of the tract supposes that the knowledge of good and evil, that is, moral discernment, knowledge of right and wrong, was a physical effect of eating the forbidden fruit. And says: "All that it, [the passage,] teaches of the condition of Adam is, that he was ignorant of good and evil. This is necessarily and directly implied in the prohibition which forbade him to 'eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.'"

As the fruits or juices of some trees produce inebriation, or change the complexion, or have a tonic or laxative influence, so this writer supposes that the fruit of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil, had the effect to convey the knowledge of moral distinctions! He makes the same curious mistake with regard to the tree of life; as though the eating of the fruit of that tree would have conferred immortality. The ground of this latter supposition is an erroneous interpretation of the words of the Most High. "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now therefore lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever: — Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden." Mr. L. evidently supposes that Adam had never eaten of the tree of life, and that there was danger of his plucking its fruit by stealth, and thus frustrating the decree of mortality by the influence of that fruit.

But a little consideration shews this to be wholly erroneous. The tree of life was not a prohibited tree. "Of *every* tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." Adam, then, had already eaten of the tree of life. Some of our judicious commentators speak of that tree as a "sacramental tree," the memorial and seal of eternal life on condition of eternal obedience. But the idea that the fruit conferred vital powers, or that it was an antidote to death, we believe is not generally accepted by biblical scholars. Neither is it supposed by them, that the

Digitized by Google

fruit of the tree of knowledge had any effect on the moral constitution. It was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in this sense ; — that while Adam abstained from plucking the fruit he would experience good, and when he should pluck it, he would experience evil. But the notion that it had any power to make the eater more intelligent; or that, as animal food invigorates the physical system of a child, so this fruit would produce some physiological or metaphysical alteration in man's nature, has no countenance from the most approved interpreters of Scripture. Mr. Lothrop has been unconsciously biased, we think, by the tempter's remarks to our first parents. His tract evidently follows Satan's exegesis. He strove to make the impression on our mother, that there was something in the effect of the fruit on the human system which was greatly to be desired. This tract falls in with the same opinion. The author has a better opinion of Satan, it is true, than we have, if "the knowledge of good and evil" be synonymous with an advanced state of moral being. But we should be at a loss to explain how the "tempter tempted Eve with his subtilty," as the apostle says, except by the suggestion of this idea. It is generally supposed that his subtle insinuation consisted in the idea, that the fruit of the forbidden tree would advance the moral condition of man, thus perverting the name of the tree, and making that which was intended to be a means of good by abstaining from it, and of evil by eating it, appear to be a source of improvement in the intellectual or moral faculties, or both, by the power of the fruit to raise the eater, "from a lower to a higher degree of intelligence."

Adhering still to this notion, that the knowledge of good and evil, that is, of the difference between them, came by eating the forbidden fruit, the author argues that the effect of the fruit was to make men "more like God in one of his faculties." This, again, was the invention of Satan. There is no other authority for the idea. He made our mother believe, (as this tract teaches,) that to eat that fruit would make her somewhat divine ; and that God knew it, and was practising imposition upon man. "For," says the tempter, "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil ; " that is, having an improved moral discernment, and becoming acquainted with many things extremely desirable to be known.

Digitized by Google

The author evidently thinks that the words of the Most High, preparatory to the expulsion of man from Paradise, are a solemn and literal acknowledgment of the undesired effect of the fruit on the first pair. Such an interpretation represents God as soliloquizing at an event which he greatly regretted, namely: the advancement of Adam and Eve in their moral discernment; but if, according to Mr. L., Adam took a step higher in the scale of the intelligent creation, we are at a loss to see why the Most High should have deplored it. He does not deplore the sin, but only the effect, namely: that man had "become as one of us," that is, God. Now this, according to Mr. L., was a positive improvement, and he uses it to shew that Adam, before his fall, and before he enjoyed this advancement, was not so high in the scale of being, as we.

The very common and obvious interpretation of this passage is the only one which is generally approved. Judicious critics represent it as an expression of holy indignation, with an admixture of irony and pity, on the part of the Most High. Behold poor man, guilty and wretched; truly this is being like one of us! Sad consequences of being beguiled by Satan, to think that eating that fruit would make him wiser! And now, lest he repeat the same folly, tempted again by Satan, and, thinking that the tree of life, instead of being a covenant seal, is an antidote to death, should rebel against the dread sentence, and vainly seek to live forever by eating of the tree which he has now forfeited, let him be driven out from the garden, to convince him that he is fallen and lost.

Any other interpretation, especially the one which Mr. L. adopts, can easily be shewn to be impossible. For any other interpretation would reject the idea of irony in these words. It would represent the Most High as saying, We did not intend that man should rise to so high a degree of intelligence. We meant to keep him low, by keeping him ignorant. This is a counterplot; and man has stolen a march in moral and intellectual progress. We must forefend ourselves against his further assumption of a higher intelligence. It will be dangerous to our plans and purposes, to let him remain in reach of a tree whose fruit once tasted will be an antidote to dying. How shall we prevail against his vaulting ambition, but by expelling him from among those trees?

Digitized by Google

Such, we think, is a just paraphrase of the words of the Most High, if Mr. L.'s interpretation be correct; an interpretation which makes the Most High more an object of commiseration than man. Yet the doctrine of this tract is founded, in part, upon this interpretation.

Next in order to our objection to this theory as based upon a false interpretation of Scripture, we remark that the tract is erroneous in the assumption which runs through it, that experience of sin is the necessary means of a "higher intelligence" in moral beings. This doctrine is plainly advanced in the foregoing extracts. It is also a favorite notion with Dr. Bushnell, as appears most fully in his letter to the Publishing Committee of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society.

We all believe that the experience of sin and redemption will, under the overruling power and grace of God, conduce to the more exalted happiness of man, and illustrate the attributes of God. All who differ on the disputed point, "Whether sin is the necessary means of the greatest good," agree in this belief. But the idea that the practical or experimental knowledge of evil is necessary to a higher degree of intelligence, we have already intimated, and repeat it with due deference, is only a "doctrine of devils." It is contradicted by facts. Woe to Gabriel and his peers, if this be so. There will then be an intellectual inferiority in heaven to the inhabitants of hell. No doubt the fallen angels believe this doctrine. Religion in their view is abjectness. The holy angels seem to them, we presume, as Milton makes Satan taunt them, in the light of bondmen to the Almighty. "Thy words," says Satan to the seraph, "argue thy inexperience!" This comports with the doctrine of the tract before us. Inexperience of sin, it is thought by some, makes a nature soft, effeminate, and pusillanimous; and to all such, it is supposed by wicked angels, their

> "Easier business were to serve their Lord,
> High up in heaven with songs to hymn his throne,
> At practised distances to cringe, not fight."

But to fight with God has something stalworth in it; to suffer punishment with an indomitable will, daring him to do his worst, is true greatness. So the knowledge of all sin opens to the mind worlds of ideas, without which a soul is yet in boyhood, and can

Digitized by Google

never be said to have attained its majority. The abominable doctrine that reformed rakes make the best husbands, is founded on this theory.

Some such doctrine as this, we have perceived, is in the minds of certain professedly Christian parents. They would not be unwilling to have their sons pass through great experience of sin, provided they could be sure of their repentance and conversion in season to do that greater amount of good to their fellow men, which, they are persuaded, they would do as a consequence of their experience in transgression. But if this be true, it is certainly singular that the author and finisher of our faith, our example, the Redeemer of lost men, was not made perfect for his work by being permitted to fall under Satan's fiery darts in the wilderness; and then, recovered from sin, use his qualifications thus acquired, to rescue his brethren.

The author of this tract probably regards the Saviour as a perfect specimen of human nature. We say *probably*, for charity impels us to say this; and yet we should infer, from his views of the power which the knowledge of evil has to raise us to a higher intelligence, and from its effects as he regards them on Adam, that the man Christ Jesus was, after all, though a very good man, yet inferior to what he would have been had he obeyed Satan in the wilderness, and thus had enjoyed the "knowledge of good and evil," in the sense in which those words are interpreted in this tract. We have for some time doubted, whether the character of Christ does inspire certain men, ministers of Christ in name, with true respect. Theodore Parker evidently has but small reverence for the human character of our Redeemer. He has used expressions with regard to him which make the blood run cold in our veins. Others in the denomination to which he yet belongs, though they must, as a matter of course, express before this community their regard for Christ, yet, if the truth were known, we believe would not assign to Jesus the highest place in moral and intellectual attainments. They themselves, by their "knowledge of good and evil," such as Jesus never had, possess the elements, in their own view, perhaps, of a higher nature, the means of a far greater moral discernment, and sources of future happiness in their deep and rich experience of sin. It seems to them a masterly thing to have been able to sin. The man who should hold his breath, and be able to stay beneath the ponderous ocean long enough to survey those

Digitized by Google

> " Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
> Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
> All scattered in the bottom of the sea ; "

or the man or angel who could pass that trackless gulf, and know the depths of hell, would have in his new sources of thought, and " higher intelligence," a noble reward for his peril and suffering. So it is, no doubt, supposed by some, that the experimental knowledge of evil is advantageous to the moral and intellectual nature. Hence, as we have said, some parents are less careful about the virtue of their children ; they give them full sweep in their acquaintances and amusements ; feeling, if their views could be interpreted, that, in accordance with the doctrine of this tract, they will be hereafter, if converted, " more like God in one of his attributes." How that one attribute of God itself became perfect without an experimental knowledge of evil, we are not informed ; " for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man ; " neither of which, we think, could be said, if the experimental knowledge of evil were the necessary means of a higher state of intelligence.

No, it is not true, that to pass through the baleful experience of vice is the means of greater intellectual and moral excellence. The imagination, the forms of thought and expression, are corrupted or tainted inevitably by experience in sin ; the soul is haunted by remembrances of foul deeds ; the sense of purity is lost ; the renewed sinner always cries : " O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me ! " The Bible sets the seal of reprobation on the notion, that experience of sin is the necessary means of a higher state of intelligence. " The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." " The knowledge of the holy is understanding." Fool and sinner, are, in the Bible, convertible terms.

The influence of this tract we cannot but regard as extremely pernicious. It first came to our knowledge in consequence of its being pointed out to a friend by a young man, who exulted in its principles as affording a defence to libertinism. It is one of the fruits of Unitarianism, acknowledged by the husbandmen of that vineyard. All which they here teach their fellow men, with regard to the apostacy and its effects on us, is, that Adam by his disobedience, " *in some way lost position and favor with God.*" " Lost position with God ! " Position ! What a word for a pro-

Digitized by Google

fessed minister of Christ to use in speaking of that tremendous event, the human apostacy, which

> "Brought death into our world, and all our woe,
> With loss of Eden."

How carefully and curiously the word is chosen. It is a diplomatic word. A minister at a foreign court, who is in some disfavor by reason of a breach of etiquette, has lost position. The word is suited to elegant social life. A lady who has married somewhat beneath her, has lost position in society. Eve erred in coveting that tree. It would have been better, in some respects, had she denied herself. And yet in what way she could ever have reached "a higher intelligence" without sinning, this tract cannot inform us. But though she became like God in one of his attributes, she did a venturesome thing; for she lost position with God by means of it. And yet, if she fell, it was like "falling up stairs." On the whole, she and her posterity will be gainers by it; though it did offend the Almighty in a measure, and she lost something thereby. It compelled the Most High to consult how he could defend himself against the law of progress, — this destiny of man to "a higher intelligence." The necessity of curbing man's prurient spirit placed man in a "position" of restraint before God, and induced some loss of former favor. But the effect on the Almighty was nothing more than that he was piqued, and devised the best method to preserve himself from any further disrespect. Adam became a "Prometheus bound." Adam's Jove was very angry, and resented it that he should have stolen a divine prerogative; but he took means to prevent the recurrence of the trespass.

And is this the fall of man! Such an apostacy, of course, needs no redemption, and Unitarianism provides none. We, as descendants of Adam, are like "a child born of a parent who has wasted his property." P. 10. That child, however, may in time become richer than his father ever was. So we have improved on the character and state of Adam, enjoy a higher intelligence, and are more "like God in one of his attributes." What has Christ to do with us? and "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God?" He professes to set us an example. Then let him first disobey God, and raise himself to a level with us! We now can teach him, rather than he us; for we have

Digitized by Google

a "knowledge of good and evil" which he never enjoyed. His name, Redeemer, seems, in view of the principles in this tract, to be unmeaning. "Redeemer!" It implies that we are lost. Nothing is lost but "position" with God, and "favor." We were "compromised," as the French say, in Adam; but as the English have it, we have since "asserted our rank."

Correct views of sin are, of course, fundamental in every scheme for human amelioration. Such being the Unitarian views of sin, as conveyed to us by this authorized exposition, we cannot look for any thing better in the views of regeneration, atonement, and future punishment, held by those who acknowledge this tract as an expression of their views of the human apostacy. What a religion for mankind! Is this "pure Christianity," "an enlightened and liberal faith," "Christianity purged from the old leaven of false views of God and human nature?" No wonder that it has never tried its efficacy on the heathen nations. It has no foreign missionaries, though it professes to republish that pure gospel which its Founder enjoined should be preached to every creature.

The theology of this tract belongs originally neither to heaven nor earth; it is contradicted by the whole Word of God, removes every fundamental principle in the system of revealed truth, and paves the way in every mind that receives it, for pride, contempt of Christ, favorable views of sin, licentiousness, the loss of the soul, and the condemnation of the devil. It is a theology suited to balls, masquerades, and card-parties. In the latter part of the tract, the author has some conservative views with regard to the proneness of our nature to sin; but after all which he has said in the first part of the tract, his readers, we apprehend, will trouble themselves but little with his discriminations.

One of the worst features of the tract is its insinuating way of bringing the Old Testament into contempt. It says: "We cannot rest in these conclusions, and yet we cannot so explain the meaning of the words, and interpret the passage, as not to lead to them." P. 7. That is, The plain meaning of Scripture here, is against reason. This is also Mr. Parker's way of girdling a Scripture history, when he is unwilling to cut it wholly down.

There is one interesting and important bearing of this tract in a local respect. Its author is generally regarded as one of the most serious and conservative of Unitarians. He was prominent

Digitized by Google

in sustaining some meetings for prayer and conference, held last winter in the Unitarian churches of this city. His remarks and spirit led some to hope, that he and others were approximating to evangelical views. But what a development have we in this tract. Here we see the foundations of the author's religious belief. The fall is a misnomer. The fall was rather an elevation; the apostacy more like an anabasis. It made man "more like God in one of his attributes." Alas! our hopes are dashed. We cannot look for figs on such a tree, nor for grapes from such a bush.

The Christian Inquirer, a New York Unitarian paper, complains that Unitarians have few or no tracts on religious biography, and religious experience, in their series, and proposes to incorporate some from the series of the American Tract Society. The reason of this destitution is obvious. There is no such thing as religious experience among those who hold the views contained in this tract, unless it be the experience of conversion from orthodoxy to Unitarianism. They have no conviction of sin in the evangelical sense, no law-work in their hearts, no sense of entire depravity and ruin, none of Paul's or Bunyan's temptations and conflicts with Satan, no discovery of free grace, no knowledge of justification by faith, no joy of pardoned sin, no love and gratitude to a dying Redeemer, no sympathy with that song of heaven, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood." Progressive sanctification, the sorrows and joys of the Christian life are no part of their spiritual history. The more we know of this system, the more we are filled with horror. Some of our dearest earthly friends are under its power. This city of the Pilgrims is greatly corrupted by it. Downward and still downward is its theology descending, to mere naturalism, denying the most obvious truths of revelation.

In the tract before us, we have the most recent development of Unitarian theology, sanctioned by the great religious Tract Society of the denomination. The fall of man was an improvement in his condition! So R. W. Emerson tells us that man's tendency is ever upward, whether he be found in a brothel, dram shop, or elsewhere. Thus error "finds no end, in wandering mazes lost." We are ashamed of this tract as a specimen of Biblical knowledge and theological reasoning, and we are astonished at its bold and groundless denials of the very plainest and most frequently reiterated truth of revelation.

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

REV. JOHN PIERCE, D. D. — Having long held in high esteem this lately departed worthy, we somewhat eagerly took up for perusal a small, but beautifully printed pamphlet, containing the discourse preached by his colleague at the Doctor's funeral, and a Biographical Sketch. As to the discourse, it is, we regret to say, in every respect, a failure. It is strangely spiritless and unfeeling. Its apathetic dullness is distressing to the reader. How such preaching could dry the mourner's tears, unless by working as an opiate to seal their eyes in slumber, it is hard to imagine. There was nothing in the coffin so lifeless as the twice-dead sermon delivered over it. It is said that Sir Godfrey Kneller, after several ineffectual attempts to execute the portrait of a stupid London Alderman, returned to the astonished cit the fee which had been paid in advance, with the remark: "Sir, you gave me this money to paint your face; but you have got no face to paint!" There is no such excuse for him who fails to delineate the strongly marked character of Dr. Pierce. The features of his mind were as massive, healthy, and genial, as those of his animated and cheerful visage. It was a sad day for his church when he departed, and left it to the sole care of one, in whom, (judging by this funeral discourse, which is all that we know of the gentleman or his performances,) there is so much less of the evangelical element, than was wont to be manifested by the good Doctor himself.

The Biographical Sketch is taken from the columns of the Christian Inquirer. It is vastly superior to the Sermon; but it is far from being a compensation for its inanity. We sincerely hope that they with whom Dr. Pierce was ecclesiastically connected, will not consent that this pine-scantling monument shall be the only tribute erected to his memory. He merits from them better treatment than this. The Christian Examiner for November contains a discriminating and well-drawn outline of the Brookline patriarch, from the pen of Dr. Putnam; but it is quite too brief and general.

The Orthodox were far from approving Dr. Pierce's "non-committalism" as to the great doctrines of the Christian faith. Yet they ever esteemed him highly for his many excellent traits of mind; and had no wish to prevent him from pursuing his own course, though they would not walk in it themselves. It was his hobby to "ride the fence" between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism; and he succeeded in the awkward attempt as gracefully as any elderly gentleman could, though he had to ride, like the ladies, with both feet on the same side. He kept his face turned to the right, toward the Orthodox, as much as might be; and a pleasant and friendly face it always was to us. But had he been flung from his side-saddle, we fear that he would have fallen in the wrong direction. It was, doubtless, easier for him to tell what he was not, than what he was; but we desire to give him the full benefit of his declaration made with such earnestness in the Massachusetts Convention, a year or two ago: "I am not a Unitarian; I never was a Unitarian; and, by the grace of God, I never will be a Unitarian!" As for the rest, we humbly leave him with that righteous Judge, whose utmost mercy we all shall need alike.

Digitized by Google

THE LAST STRIDE OF INFIDELITY. — The resurrection of our Lord was the turning point in the establishment of the Christian religion, which waited for this event before it could take sure hold upon the human mind. If the crucified Saviour had not risen from the dead at the time prefixed, his doctrine would have exploded at the outset, and would have been heard of no more. His name would have quite perished, finding no more place in history than thousands of the undistinguished victims of Roman tyranny and judicial butchery. But his fully attested resurrection fixed the faith, and fired the zeal, of the primitive disciples, till his religion has become the chief element in the history of the world. "The Lord is risen indeed," or Christianity is a fable. There is no medium between these two positions. He who denies that God raised up Jesus from the dead, is no better than a "heathen man." How can he expect to be saved by a dead man? and by one whose predictions that he should rise the third day after he was slain, were utterly falsified, proving him either an enthusiast or an impostor?

Yet Mr. Theodore Parker, in a sermon delivered on the last Sabbath in October, argued at length against the resurrection of Christ; and intimated that his appearances to his disciples, after death, were only *subjective*, that is to say, existed only in their imaginations. The utter absurdity of this notion, it were easy to shew. It is enough to say, that the man who embraces and teaches it, and yet pretends to be a minister of Christ, is no better than he whose signal to the foe was "Hail, Master!" There is treason in his kisses.

This new attack on the main evidence of Christianity, as it must have been to the earliest believers especially, will fail as surely as all the other devices against the truth. "The Word of the Lord is tried." Tested by eighteen centuries of human experience, it is proved true by its fruits, and stands demonstrated in a clearer light than ever. We have often admired the following fragment, found in the fourth volume of Coleridge's Literary Remains: "The result of my own meditations is, that the evidence of the gospel, taken as a total, is as great for the Christians of the nineteenth century, as for those of the apostolic age. I should not be startled, if I were told it was greater. But it does not follow that this equally holds good of each component part. An evidence of the most cogent clearness, unknown to the primitive Christians, may compensate for the evanescence of some evidence which they enjoyed. Evidences comparatively dim have waxed into noon-day splendor; and the comparative wane of others, once effulgent, is more than indemnified by the SYNOPSIS OF THE WHOLE, which we enjoy, and by the standing miracle of a Christendom commensurate, and almost synonymous, with the civilized world."

THE PURITAN AND HIS DAUGHTER. — We took up this work with some misgivings, but in the hope that it might not be altogether a novel. Attracted by the title, we looked for at least a historical romance. But we found only a common love-tale, spun out and interwoven with what sounds to us like the talk of a witty and garrulous old man. Mr. Paulding evidently respects the Puritans, though

Digitized by Google

he loves them not. He has done his best to stand impartially between them and the cavaliers; but it is evident that his feelings are altogether with the roystering smokers and imbibers on the first plantations of the "Old Dominion." These jovial souls he describes to the life, because he perfectly knows what manner of spirit they are of. But his Puritans are not human beings. They are, like Frankenstein, the work of a magician who is frightened at his own creation. They are like the iron-man of the Rosicrucians, very terrible in his mechanical justice. They are mere moral machines, with clock-work consciences, wiry affections, and souls wholly made up of the wheels and screws, cogs, cams, and ratchets of an iron dogmatism, all unpolished and unoiled. They have great virtues and merits; but they are the virtues of a rolling-mill, and the merits of a hydraulic press. Mr. Paulding, like multitudes of others, wholly misconceives the Puritan character. He regards them as grim and gloomy, rigid and rancorous, foes to innocent mirth, and strangers to the gentler affections. Whereas they were common mortals, in whom the common affections and sympathies of our nature were elevated, as well as strictly regulated, by the strong restraints of divine grace. They loved their wives and children as much as we love ours; but, possibly, they loved God, and duty, and self-denial more. Strange as it may seem to some, they even took pleasure in fun, such as they deemed compatible with right. Hugh Peters was a great joker; Nathaniel Ward, the author of the "Simple Cobbler," was a noted humorist; and Oliver Cromwell, it is notorious, often descended to the roughest practical jests with the great men of his court. Yet all of them were held in the highest esteem by their co-religionists. Perhaps no better mode of dispelling the absurd prejudices as to the social life of the Puritans, could be devised, than the publishing of a collection of their witty sayings, which often bit as keenly as their swords, and which must have relaxed their features into something like the hearty cheerfulness which, in all ages, has marked the British mind. We hope that no one will ever be tempted to renew Mr. Paulding's experiment of working up romances out of Puritan stuff. No man can succeed in the attempt, who is not in full sympathy with the religious life of the Puritans; — and no such man will ever write a novel.

President Hitchcock's Lectures on the Four Seasons. — We know not how to speak of these four sermons in terms of admiration so strong as we could wish; and yet we dare not speak of them so highly as we might, for fear of provoking the spirit of unbelief. We shall persist in our admiration, let those who will ascribe our enthusiasm as to this small volume to a too fond appreciation of one whom to know, is to esteem and love. We know not where to find, in so small a space, such a delightful blending of Orthodoxy, piety, science, taste, appreciation of nature, fine instinct for analogy, and "curious felicity" of simple and eloquent expression. "The Resurrections of Spring" is a discourse full of exceedingly ingenious and original discussion of the doctrine of the final resurrection; and a defence of it, on novel scientific ground, against the objections of the doubter. "The Triumphal Arch of Summer" is such a spiritualiz-

Digitized by Google

ing of that beautiful object, God's "bow in the clouds," as is singularly charming to the fancy, and soothing to the spirit. "The Euthanasia of Autumn" must be peculiarly pleasing and appropriate for perusal at the fall of the year. This is the discourse which most exalts the hope of the Christian. "The Coronation of Winter" is the most brilliant of the series, and is quite as magnificent in its way, as the gorgeous spectacle it describes with such truth and feeling. It is a great merit in these discourses, that they are affluent in impressive and appropriate quotations from the Holy Scriptures. The author has evidently been accustomed to study the "book of nature," and the "book of grace" in parallel columns, where each illustrates the other, and the harmony of both bespeaks them to be published by the same beneficent and all-glorious Author. When the President of Amherst College shall preach any more such discourses, may he, as now, have Mount Holyoke for his pulpit, and all New England for his audience!

VALEDICTION. — The editors of this work for the year now closed, assumed the duty at the request of the Publishers, after an informal appointment on the part of many of their brethren. They have fulfilled their office for the designated period, with what skill or success they leave others to say. They have found it a very pleasant and profitable duty, as respects its reaction upon their own minds and hearts; and would gladly continue their joint labors, if other and prior engagements would permit. But as this is found to be impracticable, it has been arranged by the new Publishers, to whom the work has been transferred, that the care of the editorial department for the ensuing year shall devolve on Rev. Mr. McClure. He is, however, authorized to expect efficient assistance from most, if not all, of the present editors, and from many of the ablest writers and scholars in our ecclesiastical connection.

ORDINATIONS.

Oct. 17. Professor E. C. Wines, at Vergennes, Vt., as an Evangelist.
" 18. Mr. Francis G. Pratt, Winthrop Church, South Malden, Ms.
" " Mr. Charles B. Smith, Levant, Me.

INSTALLATIONS.

Oct. 10. Rev. Lewis Pennel, New Fairfield, Con.
" " Rev. Charles Hyde, South Coventry, Con.
" 17. Rev. J. Wellman, Lowell, Vt.
" 25. Rev. William C. Foster, Shawmut Church, Boston.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Oct. 24. Rev. William Riddel, South Deerfield, Ms., æ. 83.
" 29. Rev. Nathan Rodgers, Hallowell, Me., æ. 28.

Digitized by Google

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY

FOR 1850.....VOL. IV.

THE original Editor of this Work, on resuming his former relation to it as its only responsible conductor, wishes to return his warm thanks to those numerous friends who have heretofore aided the work by their communications, or by their personal influence in its behalf. He would especially render his thanks to those brethren, with whom he was united in carrying it on during the past year. He can now, with propriety, testify to the laboriousness, zeal, and punctuality, with which they fulfilled the duty assigned them; and to the gratifying unanimity which has marked all their proceedings, though every variety of theological sentiment recognized among the Orthodox was represented in their number. The present Editor feels that he has derived the most essential and permanent benefit from his intimate association with them through the labors of that year; and is happy in being permitted to rely on their aid and advice, as future occasion may require. It will be his endeavor, that the work shall continue to exhibit, as it has done, the Orthodoxy of New England. Important as may be the points disputed among us as brethren, they are of far less consequence than the grand doctrines of the Cross on which all are substantially agreed, and the opposing errors which on every side rise up against the common faith. Any attempt to array the peaceful and united churches of Massachusetts, or other States, into rival schools or hostile factions, is to be deprecated with the utmost earnestness.

We do not wish to have any more of controversy on our pages than may be necessary for due interest and instruction in the questions of the day. "Heresy hunting" is no part of our business. The tables, in this respect, are turned, and it is heresy which often hunts us. But when it comes rushing at us with open throat, we shall neither fly nor hide. We shall meet it manfully with all suitable weapons, whether of argument, sarcasm, or Scripture.

There will be no change in the general character of THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY from what it was last year, unless it be in the attempt to make it more popular and domestic. Though arrangements have been made for securing valuable assistance, the Editor solicits still further co-operation, (which will not be wholly unrequited,) of those numerous brethren, both among the ministry and laity, whose ready pens and fervent minds are needed to vary and enrich its successive issues. May the Divine blessing attend these efforts to maintain and spread the truth in Christ!

A. W. McCLURE.

Digitized by Google

The Subscribers,—believing that such a work as THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY is needed, that it has hitherto been useful, and is destined to an increasing circulation and influence,—cordially recommend it to the continued confidence and patronage of the evangelical community.

N. ADAMS,
JOHN A. ALBRO,
E. N. KIRK,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

This Work will next year be issued from the Office of The Puritan Recorder. The two publications, however, will be as distinct as they ever were, each pursuing independently its own appropriate objects, under separate editorial arrangements.

Communications relating to the editorial department, will be addressed to Rev. A. W. McCLURE; and those belonging to the publishing department to WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & COMPANY, 22 School street, Boston.

PROPOSALS TO MINISTERS AND OTHERS.

We invite the attention of Pastors and others to the following proposals:

1. Any pastor or other person who will send us the names of four new subscribers to The Puritan Recorder or The Christian Observatory, with the pay ($2,00 each), shall receive The Puritan Recorder or The Christian Observatory for one year.

2. Any pastor or other person who will send us a less number of names than four, for either or both of the above publications, with the money for the same, shall be credited 50 cents for each name, in payment for the publication which he may select.

3. Any person who will send us more than four names, and pay for the same, may retain 50 cents per name, as his commission.

We hope that these proposals will induce many to make a special effort, who have expressed a wish for these publications, but for want of pecuniary ability have not taken them. We hope also that our ministers, who are now subscribers to The Puritan Recorder, will secure to themselves The Christian Observatory by introducing it among their people.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE &

Digitized by Google

Vol. 4.] JANUARY, 1850. [No. 1.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

A. W. McCLURE, Editor.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.
NO. 22 SCHOOL STREET.
1850.

ABNER FORBES, PRINTER, 37 CORNHILL

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
Sacred Music as a Means of Holiness,	1
The Great Centre of Attraction,	11
Tradition,	18
American Colleges and Theological Seminaries,	27
Canada,	32
Figurative Character of the Bible,	37
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Difficulties of Editorship,	43
Torrey's Translation of Neander,	44
Memoir of Professor Fiske,	44
Zoological Temperance Convention,	45
Restraining Grace,	45
The Speakership,	46
A Faithful Man,	46
Dyer on Plenary Inspiration,	46
Trinitarianism,	47
Ecclesiastical Lists,	48

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

The Publishers find that the work cannot be afforded to clergymen, more than to others, at less than the full subscription price; and, therefore, it will be furnished to ALL subscribers at two dollars per annum. We hope that this change, which is made from necessity, and not from inclination, will meet with general approbation.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 22 School Street, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO., Publishers,
No. 22 School St., Boston.

Digitized by Google

1853, 2. 14.
By Exchange

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. IV. JANUARY, 1850. No. 1.

SACRED MUSIC AS A MEANS OF HOLINESS.

MAN is solemnly obligated to turn all the powers and susceptibilities of his soul to a good account. He sins, and displeases God, if he uses them for any other purpose than the glory of God, and his own spiritual well-being. There is not a power or inward capability of the soul, there is not an art or a science growing out of it, and resting upon it as its foundation, which should not be devoted to Him "of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things." All that man is by creation, and all that he can be made by culture, ought to be offered up as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Man does not do this. And if there is any sphere of his agency and enjoyment into which religion does not enter, it is that of the fine arts: Poetry, painting, sculpture, music, have not been dedicated to God. This region of beauty and harmony has hitherto been earthly, and not heavenly. The beauty which man has hitherto worshipped has not been the beauty of holiness. Art has been worldly in its nature and tendency. The mighty influences that come off from it have not borne man upward to a pure and holy heaven, but have lulled him into an earthly sensual enjoyment.

Music, especially, has not been spiritual in its influences upon man. The very term is associated with hilarity and earthly gayety. Rarely does it awaken in the mind the thought of that solemn and deep-toned joy which dwells in

Digitized by Google

the holy heaven of heavens. Rarely does it remind of that most exquisite and beautiful of all harmonies, — the harmony and peace of a spirit all of whose powers are unfolding themselves in conformity with the law of God.

That apostate church which, for fifteen centuries, has been ruining the souls of men, has of all others specially cultivated this art. Catholicism has long been the guardian and cultivator of music, and by employing its instrumentality has charmed men never so wisely within the reach of its fangs. Nay, until within a few years, music has rather been avoided and feared, than cherished, by the class of Christians in whom dwells a purer and more austere spirit of religion. It may be stated as the result of a careful examination of the history of Christianity, that the influence of music upon the development of pure and holy feeling in the soul has been small. It has either been abused in order to the production of a mass of emotion that is no more religious or spiritual, than that which arises from the contemplation of a statue by Phidias, or a painting by Raphael; or else it has been so poorly cultivated and employed, that it did not even serve as an outlet of the pure religious feeling that may have really existed in the heart.

And yet music may become, — and the constitution of the soul by which it is capable of pouring out its feelings and of being roused by harmony shews that God designed it to become, instrumental in a true religious cultivation of the heart. There is no part of our souls which is superfluous. All our powers were created by design; and were, therefore, intended to reach the end prescribed by the Designer. The end prescribed is the glory of the Creator and the true well-being of the creature. Consequently, if man is so created that he can be moved and animated by music, it is certain that the design was that he might and should be moved and animated in a right and holy manner. The eye was made, that man might see the beauty and glory of nature, not to rest in the vision of it, but to cry out with the adoring Psalmist: "Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord; and that my soul knoweth right well." The ear, too, was made, that man might hear the music of nature and art;

Digitized by Google

not that he might yield himself up to the mere pleasure of harmony, but that his soul might be swept like a harp, and thrill with pure and spiritual emotion.

How, then, may music become a means of the growth and culture of holiness in the soul? This is the question which we propose to answer.

The plain and short answer to this question is, That music may become a means of grace, by becoming filled with the Spirit of God, and partaking of the Divine holiness.

At first sight, it may seem strange to require that in the beginning, which is proposed to be attained in the end; — to demand the preëxistence of holiness in order to the production of holiness. But strange as it may seem to one who does not look below the surface, it is nevertheless true, that all the aids to holiness are useless and ineffectual, unless the principle of holiness is already existing in the heart. We are placed in a world where God has surrounded us with the means of spiritual and holy growth; but they are all powerless, unless a holy principle of life has been implanted in our spirits, which can use them. The air may blow with the warm breath of Spring upon the tree, the genial light and heat of the sun may descend upon it, the rains may fall, and the fruitful earth may offer its nourishment; but if there is no life in the roots, no circulating sap in the trunk, to *use* these means of growth, they are of no effect. What is true in the kingdom of nature is true, with full force, in the kingdom of spirit and grace. Neither poetry, nor painting, nor sculpture, nor music, nor intellectual cultivation of any kind, can further the spiritual cultivation of man, unless there has been a spiritual principle implanted within him by the new birth, which can seize these means of improvement, and appropriate them to the strengthening and upbuilding of itself.

There is, we repeat it, no power in the fine arts alone to make man holier or better. The feeling called up by seeing a picture, or reading a poem, or hearing "a solemn music," may be, (and, unless there is holy feeling in the soul to blend with and change it, infallibly will be,) entirely alien to holiness. It is possible for a man to have an exquisite susceptibility for the objects of art, and this may be accompanied

Digitized by Google

with a refined and cultivated taste, which shall give him a quick sympathy for all which art presents,

> " Whether the instrument of *sounds* she use,
> Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues; "

and yet he may never experience one contrite emotion, one yearning for reconciliation with a holy God.

It is true that art may refine and elevate, within a certain sphere. It may, by the presentation of ideals "of truth, of grandeur, beauty, love, and hope," lead man to the worship of what is beautiful. It may turn away his contemplations from the sordid cares of an avaricious life, to the poetic and Arcadian scenes of the world of art, of which the bright sky and serene ether of her Italian home are the fittest emblems. But still art cannot produce *holy* feeling. Though it may refine and cultivate the earthly man, it still leaves him "of the earth, earthy." If he attempts to sanctify his heart by pictures, or images, or music, he will infallibly fail. He may rouse the inward senses of his soul, and a rushing stream of feeling may run through him, at the sight of the pictured agonies of Christ by Rubens, or on listening under the "embowed roof" of the old cathedral,

> " While the tubed organ feels the inspiring blast,
> And has begun its clouds of sound to cast
> Forth, towards empyreal Heaven,
> As if the fretted roof were riven; "

and yet he may rouse but the lower part of his nature, and feel no holy and spiritual emotion.

To see the difference between the feeling produced by the fine arts and that which is the product of the Spirit of God, — between æsthetic and religious feeling, — we need but to compare the life of the Italian artist of the sixteenth century with the life of the Christian of the same period. How different in its aspirations and hopes, its sympathies and antipathies, was the life of Raphael from that of Luther. The one living in the ideal world of painting and music, over whose fair landscapes "the purple light of love" poured its mellowing influence. The other living in the real, though

Digitized by Google

unseen, world of holy faith, waging stern and successful warfare against the powers of sin both within him and without. The one yielding with voluptuous indolence to the impulses and passions of a refined but carnal nature, and with gentle dalliance becoming a slave to that which it was his duty to resist and subject. The other with his eye fastened upon a holy ideal, and trusting to a supernatural power for ability to realize it, denying himself, and living a childlike life of faith upon the Redeemer. The activity of Raphael found its source and end in the earthly. It never went out of that region. Holy feeling cannot be predicated of him who was, if ever man was, under the selectest influences of art.

The life, and more particularly the death, of Schiller afford another proof of the assertion that art merely cannot make man holy. Although his life, like his poetry, was marked with a classic severity and correctness, yet there is no reason to suppose that the peculiar graces, and strength, and hopes, and feelings, which regeneration brings with it were his. We see him, through his whole life, pursuing the objects of his art with an eagerness and intensity of pursuit, which allowed of no opportunity for higher and holier thoughts. Poetry was the element in which he lived, — a poetry whose inspiration and subject-matter were earthly in their natures. Amid such all-absorbing pursuits, there was no opportunity for that quiet and painful self-renunciation and self-reflection which are the antecedents of a lively Christian faith and a life of holiness. Even on the confines of eternity, his soul was so full of the feelings of his art, that his art became his solace and stay; and his is one of the clearest instances of euthanasia which the history of great, but irreligious, men affords. "Many things are growing clearer," said he, while in the last agony. And in the hours of delirium, his mind was still upon his favorite pursuit. The din and uproar of the warlike drama were sounding in his ears.

> "The gleam,
> The light that never was on sea or land,
> The consecration, and the poet's dream,"

even then, as in the days of health, invested with a poetic drapery the objects that flitted before the eye of the dying!

Digitized by Google

Even then, scenes of earthly beauty, and visions of earthly splendor, were passing in slow procession before that inward eye, which, for a lifetime, had had its field of vision solely among them. To the Christian scholar it is one of the most mournful scenes which he can contemplate. So much calm serenity and propriety of life, — so much *classic* beauty in death; — yet no Christian feeling or faith!

But we need not go out of our own experience to see, that each and all of the arts must be overshadowed by the holy Power and Spirit from on high, in order that they may be of spiritual benefit, and contribute to raise man out of a sphere which, however beautified, is not heavenly and holy.

We have all, in a greater or less degree, experienced that flow of emotion produced by hearing a solemn anthem; and we know that, unless our souls themselves were anthems of reverence and adoration, the terms *holy* and *religious* could not be applied to that emotion. It may have been deep, and we may have been inspired with an enthusiasm which, for the time, we mistook for devotional; but yet the cool judgment of reflection makes a distinction heaven-wide between such feeling, and that which fills the rapt seraph before the throne, or the reverential penitent before the mercy-seat.

It is plain, then, that music, as one of the fine arts, in itself has no power to sanctify. It is a *means* to be used by a sanctifying power, and is not a power itself. The power which is to use it as an instrument, and which can make it a means of growth in spirituality and holiness is, as before remarked, the Holy Spirit in our spirits.

We cannot make a right use of any or all of the susceptibilities of our souls, unless we are under the indwelling influence of the Father of spirits. We cannot truly cultivate the powers given us by creation, and we cannot secure an harmonious development of them, except we are guided and actuated by the Spirit of God. It is a truth, that without God we cannot appropriate all the means of perfection around us and within us, in such a manner as to become perfect, and live in communion with God. And it is a truth, that, if our spirits were brought into union with the First Perfect and First Fair, we should unfold our capabilities of improvement to

Digitized by Google

some good purpose, and all the parts and natural excitabilities of our mysterious constitution would tend to the honor of our Maker, and our own holiness of spirit.

In order, then, that sacred music may become what it ought to become, — a means of spiritual improvement, — there must be a principle of holiness in the heart, which will transform this art, so that as it "has borne, (and naturally bears,) the image of the earthy, it may also bear the image of the heavenly." Christianity in the soul *has* this transforming power. It can convert the feeling awakened by the harmony of sounds, which in the natural heart expends itself upon itself, and is content to rest in the mere pleasurable excitement of the sense, into an organ of holy praise and adoration. Vital religion does this for all the feeling which fills man, and for all the powers and excitabilities which belong to him, for it makes all things new. These materials have no life or power in themselves. But when entered into by the holy life that comes down from heaven, they are animated, because organic, and go to build up that living temple not made with hands, and eternal in the heavens.

But to be more particular. A holy heart causes music to become a means of spiritual improvement, *by causing it to be listened to with the heart.*

There is no part of public worship so liable to degenerate into a mere custom, as singing. Indeed it is too often looked upon as a rite to be performed by an appointed number of the congregation; and is by no means participated in, after a true spiritual manner, by the whole assembly. Hence the failure to derive improvement from sacred music.

The great cause of this, is the absence of holy and adoring emotion in the souls of the people. Were our congregations all glowing with warm devotion and pure spiritual feeling, singing would be, what it ought to be, the highest act of public worship. For praise is higher than prayer; and therefore it is that, in the perfect worship above, all petitions are banished, and the spirit in utter self-forgetfulness, and in entire absorption in beholding God, sings but one song, and through eternity ascribes blessing, and honor, and power, unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

Digitized by Google

If the music of the sanctuary were heard by hearers whose souls were in some degree at least filled with adoration of God, it would be listened to with the heart; — and if the heart were in this rite of worship, it would become mighty in its influence. If now, the souls of the hearers were filled with the holy emotion which is produced by the Spirit of God, and if they joined in the anthem of praise in such a manner that it should be but the overflow of their own deep and strong emotion, this part of the services of the sanctuary would be greatly sanctifying in its character.

One of our best writers has remarked, that the design of sacred music is *ex*pression and not *im*pression; that is, that its proper aim is to afford an outlet for holy feeling, and not to awaken it where it does not exist. This is the true idea of music in the sanctuary, and is the very contrary of that which the Catholic Church aims at by its music. The sole purpose of music with her is to impress, to rouse; not to bear up to heaven the holy feeling already existing in the hearts of worshippers. And, therefore, the sublime music of St. Peters, although it hushes the vast assemblage into profound silence, now dissolves it into tears, and now warms it into overwhelming enthusiasm, has no sanctifying effect upon the heart. The clouds of sound have no effect that differs in kind from the clouds of incense, that roll and rise through the immensity of that temple. For the music merely pleasantly excites the sense of hearing as the incense pleasantly excites the senses of sight and smell.

That music may become *ex*pression, a means of bearing up the feelings of *worship*, and thus a means of spiritual improvement, it is plain that the hearer must be possessed of those feelings. Then, as his emotion rises pure as frankincense before the throne, borne on the wings of the psalm, the hymn, the anthem, or the chant, is he a true worshipper, and partakes of the sanctifying effect of true worship. Volume after volume of feeling is carried upward, emotion deepens and becomes more ardent, grace is given for grace, and, at the close of the service, the spirit is conscious of having truly offered praise to God, and of having tasted of the powers of the blessed world to come. A holy calm is left in the heart,

Digitized by Google

and the hearer feels that the music of the house of God has been a means of spiritual improvement; — nay, even that this part of the services of the sanctuary has left an influence such as no other part can leave. For it is a truth, that praise, more than any other act, sanctifies the soul. Praise is the very bloom and flower of a holy life, — its most perfect manifestation; and therefore it is, that, in this imperfect state, the Christian finds it easier to pray than to praise.

Thus does holiness in the spirit enable the hearer to join in heartily with the music,— to make it as it were the dictation of his own feelings, the product of his own spirit; and, therefore, the means of spiritual growth. Man can make no improvement in any respect, unless *his heart and soul use the means* of improvement. No man can receive the intellectual culture that comes from the reading of Shakspeare, unless, for the time, he can lose himself in the stir, and life, and feeling of the drama. And that he may do this, there must be a preparatory state of the mind, a fitness of intellectual character, to enter into the spirit of that wonderful being. The scholar feels the need of such a preparation, and only in a peculiar mood will he read a particular author. Lamb said, that previous to reading Milton he wished to hear a solemn service of music, that he might be prepared to appreciate the grandeur and magnificence of the "Paradise Lost."

This law runs through our whole being, and is true, especially in the domain of religion. We need a preparation, in order to use the means of religious culture, and inasmuch as we are spirits, and not dull clods which can be moved only from without, we need to be moved from within. Into the deep places of the soul, the Spirit of God, the only agent that can enter the secret and hidden parts of the spirit, must enter, and there abide. We must first possess an indwelling principle of holiness, and then all things will work together for our spiritual good. That the music of the sanctuary may be a means of religious culture, there must be a previous preparation of the heart. There must first be holiness, in order to the increase of holiness through this instrumentality.*

* On this point see Edwards's Works, Vol. iii. p. 235.

Digitized by Google

A holy heart causes music to become a means of spiritual improvement, *by causing it to be performed from the heart.*

Although interest within the heart of the hearer, goes far to compensate for want of interest in the speaker or the singer, yet it cannot entirely compensate for it. The warmest heart will infallibly be made less ardent, if it is not addressed by a warm heart. The deepest and swiftest current of feeling will infallibly become less swift in its rush, if deep and swift feeling in the speaker or singer, does not commingle with it. It is a law of our nature, that earnestness and heartiness animate us, and that indifference or mechanical execution deaden us. Religion does not destroy this law, but *uses* it; and, therefore, in order that any of the means of spiritual growth may be fully effective, they must be used in an effective manner.

A choir of singers, therefore, whose duty it is to lead the devotional praise of the congregation, ought to be full of the spirit of praise. If it be true, as it is, that the minister ought to be uncommonly spiritual in his feelings that he may lead the prayers of the people, it is equally true, that the choir should be specially under the influences of heaven, and be possessed in an uncommon degree of the feelings of heaven. Not only is it wrong to sing praises to God when the heart is not in the work, but music will fail greatly in being a means of improvement for the hearts of the congregation, if it is not the outburst of souls replete with seraphic affections.

There is a *professional* enthusiasm which may be thought capable of supplying the deficiency of religious feeling, but it is not. Even in secular music, more than this is required. The mere musical *artist* is not qualified to sing the songs of Burns. No! there must be an entrance into the spirit of that first of song-writers, so that the singing shall be what the songs themselves are,—*warblings*. The mere musical artist cannot worthily execute the harmonies of Mozart or Beethoven; —or rather, he *will execute* them, and deprive them of all their deep-seated life, as he turns them from an organic whole, "musical as is Apollo's lute," into a cunningly contrived mechanism, a mere assemblage of musical notes, juxtaposed according to rule.

Digitized by Google

All this holds true, in its full force, of sacred music. The spirit of the hymn, the psalm, or the anthem, must be in the singer, if it is to be worthily sung, and is to conduce to the animation and elevation of the audience. There may be correctness in the performance, every note may have the exact time given to it, but unless there is a spirit to inform and dwell in the whole,—unless the body of sound and the course of the harmony really are the embodiment of the sentiment and spirit of the piece, the highest and last end of sacred music is not reached. There will be no true life in the music, and therefore the effects of life will not be seen in the audience.

A piece of music is not perfectly performed, and it does not do its perfect work, if it is performed merely according to rule. It is possible for the chemist to mix together the elements of which flesh is composed, and to mould them into the semblance of the human body with such perfection as to deceive the eye; but it is not a *body* even, until the breath of life has been breathed into its nostrils, and it becomes at the same time a *living soul.* And when that life has departed, it is a corpse. So, too, it is possible to sound scientifically the notes, and utter the words of a piece of music, and yet there be no music. Expression is wanting, which is to the piece what life is to the body. And there can be no expression, unless there is something to be expressed, not merely *in* the words and notes, but by the words and notes *in* the soul of the musician.

There must be expression, life, soul, in the music of the house of God, if spiritual improvement is to be attained. And it can be attained if these are present. Why else are we so moved and affected in the mornings of Spring, by the music which we hear on all sides? It is because of that heartiness and spirit which dwell in the singing of birds. Seated upon the topmost branch of the tree, the little singer sings from the heart. He warbles out the joy and the fresh life which Spring brings with it. His little frame dilates, and thrills, and quivers with feeling, for

"Music stirs in him like wind in the tree."

Digitized by Google

If we, as Christians, had that quick sympathy with the Spirit of God which the bird has with the spirit of Nature, we, too, should sing and praise heartily, like him; and our music would be animating, like his. If our hearts were full of holy affection, and a deep communion were established between our spirits and their Maker, and we had a clear vision of his glory, music of the noblest order would become the natural language of our souls. They would spontaneously kindle into song, and the anthem would leave us in breathless adoration of the invisible and blessed God.

A choir thus filled with the spirit of praise could not fail of carrying the feelings of the church with them. The languid affections of the people of God would be enlivened, and both singers and hearers would commingle their emotions, and *praise* would rise up to God like a cloud of incense. And as the earnest manner and solemn address of the preacher, sometimes involuntarily arrest the attention of the thoughtless sinner, so the rapt adoration and warm devotion of the music of the sanctuary might exert an awakening influence upon those, whose inward condition would prevent them from being spiritually benefitted by it. As the bard of old paganism was deemed to be the special favorite of the gods, and was treated as such, the sweet singer of the Christian temple would be regarded with reverence, as performing an important part of the worship of God, and with that veneration with which we regard one dedicated to the glory of God.

In order, then, that music may become a means of the growth and culture of holiness, both hearers and singers must be possessed of that principle of holiness which alone can effectually make use of this, or any other of the means of growth with which God has surrounded us. This is the result to which a thoughtful contemplation of the nature of the human spirit, and of the materials of improvement among which it is placed, necessarily leads. There is no religious cultivation without that new birth which implants a new principle of life. If this be implanted, then all the materials of improvement can be used. If this be not implanted, then the materials lie around us, of no benefit or use, because life cannot come from them, but must be imparted to them.

Digitized by Google

We are the more earnest upon this point, because it is too often overlooked. Man is ever inclined to attempt self-culture without the sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit. By training the fancy, by cultivating the imagination, by informing the mind, by softening the affections, and by refining the sentiments, he would produce that inward perfection necessary in order to a blessed life with God. He calls the arts, sciences, and letters to his aid; and, through their agency, seeks to evolve spirituality of character. This process is vain, because these agencies have no sanctifying power in themselves, and because the evil which is to be cured is far within, and cannot be reached by them. All true spiritual cultivation must commence in the centre of the spirit, and work outwards. That the arts, sciences, and letters may become a means of holy growth, they themselves must become irradiated by the light from heaven,— must be made alive by the life from heaven.

It has been our aim in this article, to shew the truth of this assertion so far as music is concerned. This is one of the means of growth in true holiness. The basis laid for it in the construction of our souls, proves that, in common with all the gifts of God, it is designed to contribute to the formation of a perfect character, such as will be fit to enter a perfect world,— to the production of that holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. That music may contribute to the increase of holiness both in hearer and singer, both hearer and singer must be possessed of a holy heart; and that any fallen man may come to possess a holy heart, he must be a subject of regeneration.

Sin, by a certain school of theologians, is represented as being disharmony,— a discord entering into the otherwise harmonious song of creation. It is more than this, for there is the great main element of *guilt* in it. But yet it is true, that sin is disharmony, a disturbance of the right and harmonious working of the powers of the soul. Sin has caused the note of discord to sound through the universe of God. Let us, however, remember that it is the design of the Creator, to restore the harmony; and that, by yielding ourselves to that Spirit, (whose voice by its law, in the language of Hooker,

Digitized by Google

is the harmony of the world,) we become free from inward discord and dissension. When the Spirit of God enters our hearts, we come to partake of the peace and holy serenity, which the Revelation represents under the imagery of music and song.

There is nothing which is so appropriately a symbol of holy blessedness as music. The ancients fabled that the planets, as they circle in their orbits, give forth a music far more melodious than any which can strike upon a material ear,— the silent music of orderly and harmonious motion. There is also a musical and deep harmony, when the peace of God enters into the renewed spirit. That calm rest in God which is the ultimate end of redemption, is the restoration of the harmony that was disturbed. And if the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy, at the creation, what shall be the anthem of praise to the Redeemer of creation,— to the Creator of the new heavens and the new earth? What *can* it be but that rapt love, that unutterable joy, that tranquil adoration, of which the silent music of the spheres is the fittest emblem?

THE GREAT CENTRE OF ATTRACTION.

Our Lord is spoken of in either Testament as a foundation-stone, elect, precious, tried and sure. And whoso is built into the living temple which stands on that firm foundation, shall never be ashamed or confounded.

But there is one peculiarity about this foundation-stone which is worthy of our highest admiration; — and that peculiarity is its magnetic power. It possesses a resistless attraction for every block and fragment which belongs to it, drawing them to itself with the utmost certainty, and drawing them in due order, each at the proper time, and each to its proper place in that structure "which is not made with hands." The fabled harp of Orpheus had no such power to call into the walls of his ancient city, the marbles which,

Digitized by Google

of their own accord, came in obedience to the moving and magic strains of his wonder-working music, and framed those legendary towers.

Jesus resembles the load-stone, not only in its power to attract the tempered steel, but also in its power of imparting its own magnetic virtue to the obedient metal. Let the steel but for one instant touch the wondrous stone, and it is forthwith imbued with the same attractive quality. And no less does the soul which once comes in contact with the Saviour, receive from his fulness grace for grace; and the longer and closer the embrace, the more intensely is the soul penetrated and vivified with his life.

As the load-stone teaches the needle to point invariably to "the sides of the north," so Jesus teaches the soul which he has touched to tend constantly toward that immovable pole on which all things revolve, pointing ever to God as the source of its life, and the law of its being. And if the needle, though of generous temper, be diverted from its polarity by the too near approach of baser metal, — or if it be rudely shaken from its own proper direction,— it quickly quivers back again toward the point of its steadfast attraction. And, in like sort, the soul to which Jesus has given a dominant tendency toward the throne of God, may be for a while deflected and turned aside by coming too near to the allurements of the world,— or may be roughly shaken round the points of the compass by the violent collisions of worldly care and calamity; — but the instant it is liberated from these interruptions, it is agitated, with uneasy and painful vibrations, till it has once more settled back, into its proper bearing, and rests in its allegiance to the centre of its hopes and desires.

This sentiment is beautifully expressed by Leighton, in reference to that faith which "endures as seeing Him who is invisible," and confides in electing love: "Though the mariner sees not the polar-star, yet the needle of the compass which points to it, tells him which way he sails: thus the heart which is touched with the load-stone of Divine love, trembling with godly fear, and yet still looking towards God by fixed believing, points at the love of election, and tells the soul that its course is heavenward, towards the haven of

Digitized by Google

eternal rest." Nor have the poets overlooked this delightful comparison;

> "As still to the star of its worship, though clouded,
> The needle points faithfully o'er the dim sea,
> So, dark as I roam, in this wintry world shrouded,
> The hope of my spirit turns trembling to thee,
> My God, trembling to thee,—
> True, fond, trembling to thee."

Nor is this all. The steel once touched and polarized by the magnet, imparts something of its newly acquired faculty to every body of a nature like its own, with which it comes into contact. From this time they mutually cling together, till forcibly separated; and the more freely this magnetic quality is imparted the stronger it becomes, and the greater is the weight which it is enabled to sustain. And this combination of so many distinct masses of steel, held together by the invisible power of mutual attractions, and common repulsions, may serve as an emblem of the communion of saints, who are joined in one by an invisible sympathy, which, as it were, has magnetized them all alike. For as iron, wherever magnetized, corresponds with every other particle of the same metal, whether large or small, whether smooth or unpolished,— so every soul which has felt the touch and inspiration of the love of Christ, answers to every other soul in like manner affected, be it wise or simple, rich or poor, high or low, and in whatsoever part of the church or of the world it may abide. Such is the fellowship of kindred minds, when this celestial virtue has gone out of Jesus, and has entered into their being. It is the potent, though invisible, cement which holds together God's spiritual temple in eternal unity and celestial beauty; and the magnetic currents, or streams of attractive influence, are something like the influences proceeding from the Son of God, on whom as its perpetual foundation, the whole building of God stands in its majesty and glory. Thus placed in spiritual communication with each other, the people of God sustain a mutual relation like that of the several parts of a living body, in which "if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it."

Digitized by Google

Nor is the striking analogy exhausted. As the extended wires conduct words and thoughts, impelled by the magnetic energy, over the greatest spaces, with instant promptness, even so the believer is placed by faith in such immediate communication with the throne of grace, that his prayers are telegraphed at once to heaven; and no less promptly are the answers returned to him in this lower world. Thus each percussion of the heart, like an excited battery, produces its re-percussion from on high. So far does the electric thrill out-speed the flight of the sun, that a message despatched from the Atlantic coast at noon, would reach its destination on the Pacific shores long before that hour; and a reply could be remitted bearing an earlier date than the original message. This scientific paradox, in which the message so strangely antedates itself, and is answered before it is sent, has been likened to the beautiful language of the prophet, in which the Infinite Hearer of prayer promises to anticipate the petitions of his people: "And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." As Gabriel flew at the beginning of Daniel's supplication, and reached him before it was ended, so He who "understandeth our thought afar off," is present with his aid before we have fully known it ourselves.

"My thoughts lie open to the Lord,
Ere they are formed within;
And ere my lips pronounce the word,
He knows the sense I mean."

Great are the marvels of science, but more admirable are the wonders of the world of grace. Of that world Jesus is the central attraction; and the more he is uplifted in the preaching of his gospel, the more surely and strongly will he "draw all men unto him." How sweet and winning is this influence! On the words, — "Draw me, and we will run after thee," — Charnock remarks: "The will is drawn, as if it would not come; it comes, as if it were not drawn." When once brought home to Jesus by his grace, penetrated by his life, and assimilated to his nature, his saints forever cleave unto him, and each other, in the unity of the Spirit.

Digitized by Google

TRADITION.

WHAT is tradition? It is the transmission of opinions and practices from parents to children, and from age to age; and this transmission is usually made by "word of mouth," at least for a time, without written records. Thus children learn their mother tongue, and most of their earlier sentiments, before they have learned to read, and by tradition from their parents. In religion, tradition purports to be the remembrance of precepts given verbally by the founders of any religion, and not committed to writing by their express direction. Thus the Jews religiously observe many precepts, which they believe to have originated with Moses, and to have been taught by him to the elders of Israel, and by them to have been handed down to their successors, and so on, for many ages, without any surer record than the memories of those who were entrusted with these treasures. These reported instructions, so long left afloat on the treacherous seas of human memory, which always forgets far more than it can recall, were at last collected, and reduced to writing. This collection was begun about a hundred and fifty years before the birth of our Saviour, and is now printed in twelve folio volumes, and goes under the name of *Talmud*, or doctrine. Though it forms a huge heap of absurdities and frivolities; it is held by most of the Jews in the highest veneration. They even place it above the authentic writings of Moses and the prophets; comparing the Hebrew Scriptures "to water, and the Talmud to wine, — the text of Moses to common pepper, and the Talmud to aromatics." There is, however, a small sect of Jews, a sort of Protestants, who despise the follies of the Talmud, and profess to follow the Old Testament prophets alone.

The Church of Rome, and other churches which have the most in common with her, has also numerous traditions, regarded with far more tenderness than that inspired volume which prophets and apostles penned as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The Romanists pretend, that the apostles, besides what they have given us in the New Testament,

Digitized by Google

delivered many things only into the ears of their disciples, whose mouths have transmitted them to succeeding ages; till these also, at last, were accumulated in the vast and voluminous writings of the fathers of the church. The Council of Trent assigns equal authority to the written and the unwritten Word of God,— to the Bible and to ecclesiastical tradition;— but, in reality, the superiority is given to the latter, because the Council held that the sense of the Bible should be determined by tradition, and not that tradition should be ruled by the Bible.

In the New Testament, "traditions" are spoken of thirteen times. In ten of these instances, they refer to those rabbinical traditions with which our Saviour accuses the Jewish teachers of corrupting and supplanting the commandments of God. In the other cases, they are used by the apostle Paul, to denote those precepts or rules which he and his associates had given to the churches, whether orally or by epistles. And *these* traditions, given by inspired apostles themselves, at first hands, are the only traditions which the thorough Bible Christian will admit into his "rule of faith."

While there is always abundance of minds, impatient of the restraint of authoritative rules and fixed principles, the great majority of men, especially all the well-disposed, will naturally crave some trusty and sufficient guide in matters pertaining to personal character and eternal salvation. There are few indeed, who do not, at times, feel a strong desire for some "open vision," or some "voice from heaven," to banish the perplexing doubts excited by the diversity and conflict of opinions among men. Who is right? How can I know that I am right myself? These are questions of the utmost importance. And how are they to be definitely answered? Where is there an infallible test of opinion and duty? Shall I follow reason? Alas, how has human reason been stultified and disgraced by infinite follies and fantasies!

> "Dim as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
> To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
> Is Reason to the soul; and as on high
> Those rolling fires discover but the sky,—
> Not light us there,— so Reason's glimmering ray
> Is lent, not to assure our doubtful way."

Digitized by Google

Shall I make philosophy my guide? Ah me! Its chief votaries confess with shame, that there is no absurdity in morals so gross and hurtful, but what it has been countenanced by some of the most famous of their tribe. And the prince and patriarch of the English philosophers has said of his brethren, that they, too, are like the stars, "which give little light, because they are so high." Shall I, then, commit myself to the leadings of conscience? But ah, how many atrocities have been committed even in this sacred name! How widely at times, does this watchman wander from his post;

> "Or else the sentinel,
> That should ring larum to the heart, doth sleep."

Shall I yield myself to the impulses of feeling, earnestly acting out the promptings of my own heart to do what, on the moment, seems most to be desired? But this will be to pursue the chase with my own passions for my hounds; and, from being the huntsman, I shall become the prey; and be run down and devoured by the pack I have cherished.

There remain to me, then, but two other pilots who offer to bring me off from this sea of doubts, where the doubts themselves are fluctuating as the waves, and fickle as the winds. I must choose between the Bible and Tradition.

And here, it is obvious, that if I adopt the Bible, I must take it in the character in which it presents itself,—as a supernatural record of "what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requireth of man." As the Bible claims to be "the word which the Lord hath spoken," it must be accepted as such, or utterly rejected. But if it be accepted as a book fully inspired of God to reveal his will for our salvation, then must it be our only and perfectly sufficient rule of faith and practice. It stands alone, like its divine Author. It can have no endorsements, and no supplements, for all such must be of infinitely inferior origin, and can have no equal or concurrent authority. Who shall presume to speak after God hath spoken? Who will ask any corroboration of a testimony which is strictly Divine? Had we ten thousand other oracles, all perfectly reliable and trust-worthy, yet must they be superseded at once by the utterances of the

Digitized by Google

God of omniscience and truth. They must be so far inferior in dignity, in fulness, in certainty, and in vitalizing power, that we should not heed them for a moment; but turn at once to the lively oracles of God. It would seem that men, who acknowledge these divine documents, and recognize the broad seal of heaven which they bear, would have nothing to do but to bow in reverent submission "to every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

And yet the fact is far otherwise. There are multitudes who profess to believe in a divine revelation made through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, who are far from relying on these documents with an exclusive preference for their teachings. Thus the Papist will not receive the Bible alone as the rule of faith, only as it is interpreted, or is supposed to be interpreted, by a certain holy corporation which he calls the Church, whose voice, uttered through the priesthood with the pope for mouth-piece, is perfectly infallible. The Swedenborgian, also, professes to be a venerator of great part of the Bible in the divine character it bears; but he will listen to what the Bible says, only as it is re-uttered and reëmbodied in the eloquent ravings of his beloved Swedish sage. The Puseyite is no infidel as to the sacred canon. He would rather make it larger than smaller. But he sighs after that "Catholic unity" of the church, whose semblance, (for it existed only in semblance,) was for ever shattered by the Reformation. To recover as much as possible of this shadow of visible catholicity, they would work magically with the "traditions of the elders," and with the broken spells and worn-out charms of ecclesiastical antiquity. They abhor the names of Luther, Melanchthon, and Calvin,— "the least of whom," as so competent a judge as Coleridge has said, "was not inferior to St. Augustine, and worth a brigade of the Cyprians, Firmilians, and the like." Then, too, we have the gentlemen of the "historical development" school, who forbid us to go directly to the Bible to find out what is the Christian religion; and tell us to learn it from what they falsely call the Apostles' Creed, as it was developed in the recorded public sentiment of the Church through successive ages. In this way they are likely to lapse into all

Digitized by Google

the superstitions of doctrinal papistry, only without the convenience of a pope to give consistency and unity to their "churchly" notions. They fall under Luther's condemnation, as "attributing more power to the church, which is begotten and born, than to the Word, which hath begotten, conceived, and borne the church." Next we have the Rationalists, who would be outraged if they were called infidels, so long as they profess that the Bible "contains the record of a revelation." But they utterly refuse to acknowledge any part of the contents, (though the whole contents claim equal authority,) as belonging to such record, unless it seems *rational*; — that is, rational *to them*; — as though God's own Word could teach them no truths, except such as they might know to be truths without its help. Along with these cold and reasonless reasoners, we have those who have been known among us, of late, as Transcendentalists. These maintain, that the Bible, a considerable portion of it at least, is divinely inspired; but inspired only in the same sense in which any work of genius or taste is inspired; — inspired only as any and every man is inspired, when his mind is illuminated by the flash of a bright idea. Persons thus transcendentally gifted have little need to repair to the Bible as a rule of faith, being sufficiently guided by their own sublime intuitions, or perfectly content to dwell amid phosphorescent mists, and intoxicating gasses.

Now all these persons, — and as many as are like them in claiming to be Christians, while, in various ways, they slip their consciences from under the paramount obligation to hear the word of the Lord as set down in the Bible, — are actuated by one and the same spirit. However unconsciously to themselves, they are moved by the same inward principle, though it impels them, according to their several tastes or circumstances, in such diverse directions. They are all alike governed by *secret unbelief in regard to the Bible.* The "carnal mind" which is "enmity with God," can stand in none but an unfriendly attitude toward that Holy Book which emanates from God, and so fully speaks his will. Even in good, but imperfect men, the subtle workings of the fleshly mind disguise themselves under the deceptive form of a rev-

Digitized by Google

erence for Christianity beyond what they bear for God's own Word itself,—as though Christianity were anything else but the surest and purest utterance of that Word. However widely and violently such religionists may vary among themselves, they agree in this. The Bible does not say what they want it to say; and so they are secretly angry with it, and try to supersede or overrule it, so far as may be necessary for their purposes, by ingenious speculations, or traditional authorities.

The proof of this assertion is plain and direct. If the Bible taught as they would have it teach, and taught nothing else, they would be perfectly satisfied with it. They would ask nothing more. They would endure nothing more. What!—they would exclaim,—Put anything in competition with divine testimony,—Amend or add to God's own declarations! Out upon such daring irreverence, and worse than atheistical impiety! They would reject with abhorrence every tampering tradition of men, which should contravene the rule of Scripture, or "palter with it in a double sense." And it is only because the Bible does not speak according to their wishes, that it excites in their bosoms a deep and unappeasable discontent with it, as the supreme and only final arbiter of human belief and conduct. And so their traditionary church is brought in with her noisy legions; and the clamorous and discordant cries of Fathers and Councils drown the "still, small voice," which is only audible to such as "have an ear to hear."

Men who will have in their religion something that the Bible does not furnish, must seek elsewhere for it. It is well argued by Dr. Lightfoot: "The papist saith, Scripture is not sufficient to instruct all things of religion. True; not of the Romish religion. For the rags that patch that, you must go to some other broker; for the divine wardrobe of Scripture hath none such,—Scripture never knew such base ware; we must go to some other kind of shop for it. And that pedlar, with them, is Tradition." What a precious collection is to be found in this "old-curiosity shop!" Seven times, at least, in his numerous writings, does Lord Bacon repeat one of his favorite sayings: "Time seemeth to be of the nature of

Digitized by Google

a river or flood, that bringeth down to us that which is light or blown up, and sinketh and drowneth that which is solid and grave." We now regard with admiration the hoary ruins, which in the days of their strength were the strongholds of cruel oppression. Time, investing them with the charms of a fabling antiquity,

> "Has mouldered into beauty many a tower,
> Which, when it frowned with all its battlements,
> Was only terrible."

The history of the ancient world is a vast commentary on the irresistible proneness of the heart to substitute idols for God, and human traditions for divine commands. "As early as the third century, the church had begun to paganize Christianity, under the pretext, and no doubt the hope, of Christianizing paganism." And the remark of Governor Stoughton holds good as ever: "Babylon paints her face anew at this day; Antichrist hath vanished his interest in her, so that there are many who are allured and taken with the beauty of that harlot." There are many, besides Newman and Brownson, who verify another remark of the same old Puritan, that "a loose protestant is fit to become a strict papist." Oh, that there were more, who, in opposition to such renegades, could say with the excellent Philip Henry: "I am too much a *catholic* to be a *Roman* catholic."

It is a decided objection to the use of tradition as a standard of judgment in matters of morals and piety, that it is so enormously *cumbrous*. No man can be sure that he is master of the instrument, till he has thoroughly studied that thick array of tall folios whose extended files cause the undershelves of the great libraries to groan in hopeless oppression. Here and there may be found some "Doctor Dry-as-dust," who, like a book-worm, has gnawed his way through vellum, parchment, and papyrus, from end to end. But by the time he has digested the voluminous masses of the Fathers and the Councils, his heart is turned to ashes, and his brain to powder. And what is the great body of honest Christian folk to do with such a rule of faith, as could not be lifted and applied to determine any doctrine or duty by

Digitized by Google

a hundred giants with each a hundred arms? One short sentence from the pure testimonies of God, is worth the whole!

Then, too, there is a tormenting *uncertainty* about such a rule of faith. We are warned on our peril, to hear the voice of the church, our mother, in all past ages. But we are like the fabled travellers at the South pole, where the intense cold froze up their words unheard, as fast as uttered; and when the thaw came, the sounds all melted out together, in a confusion of tongues that brought back the days of Babel. To say nothing of the endless controversies and contradictions among the fathers, it is certain that they had no better Bible than we; and no better promises as to the guidance of the Spirit in understanding the Bible, than the church has now. Besides, we have the advantage of antiquity on our part; for the church was then comparatively young, and immature, and easily misled; whereas, by this time, she is many centuries older, and is doubtless the wiser for her large experience.

Tradition, as a sure source of information on religion, is *unsatisfying*, as well as uncertain. Sir Walter Scott has roundly said: "Tradition, generally speaking, is a sort of perverted alchemy, which converts gold into lead." Even the famous Hooker, the champion of episcopacy, was forced to take the same ground. The Church of Rome, he says, "cannot possibly be ignorant, what hazard the truth is in, when it passeth through the hands of report, how maimed and deformed it becometh." The cause of writing the Scriptures, he asserts, "hath been, to the end that things by God revealed unto the world, might have the longer continuance, and the greater certainty of assurance; by how much that which standeth on record hath, in both these respects, preëminence above that which passeth from hand to hand, and hath no pens but the tongues, no books but the ears, of men to record it." The Bible is a definite object, a tangible reality, whose words are "spirit and life." We can turn to a precept or a proof-text at once; and if He who formed our minds cannot speak his will to us intelligibly, we know not who can. Coleridge, a man of much "churchly feeling," and an admirer of antiquity, has forcibly remarked: "We all know what we mean by the Scriptures; but how know we what they,

Digitized by Google

[Papists, Puseyites, and Mercersburgers,] mean by the Church, which is neither thing nor person?" Strange infatuation, which delights in the vague and doubtful, rather than in that which gives the assurance of faith, and hope, and understanding. And so zealous are they to bite others with the same madness, that we shall do well to heed a caution of undoubted *apostolicity*: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, *after the tradition of men*, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The Bible is the only tradition to which the true protestant can submit. He regards the inspired writers as so many scribes writing by divine dictation; and whose writings God has ever sanctioned as his own. As Augustine said: "Whatever God would have us read concerning his acts and sayings, he commanded to be written by these men as if by his own hands."

Viewing the Scripture in this character, thus infinitely exalted above all mortal traditions, with what power and majesty is it invested! This, and not musty traditions, is the word which the ministers of Christ will preach, if faithful to their high commission. They will draw their doctrine only from this pure river of living waters. They will dread the thought of putting the souls of their hearers in peril, by giving them instruction drawn from any other source, than "the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

And the hearers of the gospel,— they are bound to receive whatever comes to them from the Bible with unquestioning belief. Whatever they hear from the pulpit agreeable to the Scriptures, they are to obey from the heart, as being the undoubted Word of the Lord. And whatever they hear which is foreign from the Scriptures, they are to reject as they would counterfeit money, or spurious medicine. They are to "search the Scriptures daily," to see whether the things they hear, are, or are not, according to the truth of inspiration. The Bible is a most holy and venerable thing. Would that we were more like those good old saints, such as Dr. Scott the commentator, who studied it on their knees. Then would there come upon us the blessing that is written: "To this man will I look," saith the Lord, "even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, AND TREMBLETH AT MY WORD."

Digitized by Google

AMERICAN COLLEGES AND THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

We have often thought of it as affording matter of patriotic and devout congratulation, that the Colleges of our country are to so great an extent, conducted by men of enlightened piety. With few exceptions, the presidents and professors are Christian men, who not only make the Bible their own standard of truth and duty, and the basis of government and instruction in the institutions under their care; but who, from these watch-towers on which they stand, raise the cry of alarm, or send forth a word of encouragement, as occasion may require, to those who live and labor in the surrounding region. Worthy successors of the Chaunceys and Mathers of Harvard, and of the Davieses and Edwardses of Nassau Hall, in the days of primitive Puritanism, they publish volumes of sermons, systems of Christian ethics and metaphysics, and bodies of divinity. They lay literature and science under contribution to illustrate and defend natural and revealed religion. They deliver lectures before Lyceums, Institutes, and popular audiences, on the evidences of Christianity, and on its application to the ordinary affairs of life. They unlock the treasures of learning and piety, which are enshrined in foreign languages, whether ancient or modern, and translate them into the vernacular tongue; or, better still, cast them in the mint of their own minds, and make them the current coin of their own country. They visit, in their travels, lands once trodden by patriarchs and prophets, apostles, and our Lord himself, and return laden with spoils, to enrich the history or geography, the philology or hermeneutics of the Scriptures. They dig into the solid earth, and like Moses on Mount Sinai, they bring forth a revelation written on tables of stone by the finger of God, reaching back historically to those early ages when the mountains were brought forth, and God was forming the world, fraught with lessons of wisdom to the present age, and stretching forward also with many a prophetic glance to the end of time,—a revelation, in many of its facts and principles, strikingly corroborative of that contained in the Bible. They explore

Digitized by Google

the starry heavens, and after wandering over fields of vision and contemplation, in comparison with which the earth's entire orbit is a point too minute for measurement; — after visiting, with the eye and the mind, worlds so distant that their light must have set out long before man's creation to have reached us in this fifty-ninth century from Adam, they return and give utterance to their emotions, (not otherwise so well expressed,) in the language of inspiration: "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him!"

We might go further, and thank God, while we congratulate ourselves, that the Colleges of our country are, to so great an extent, in the hands of those denominations of Christians, which we regard as most distinctively Puritan in their doctrines and spirit; insomuch that, throughout the great West, it has become almost a proverb, that if you wish a College to live and thrive, you must put it into the hands of Congregationalists or Presbyterians. In view of such a fact, New Englanders may well hope, and rejoice greatly in the hope, that the leaven of their Pilgrim Fathers will gradually leaven the whole lump; till, like the model of all institutions in the cabin of the Mayflower, not only the churches, but the schools and colleges, the states and the nations, of the New World are informed and animated by the very spirit of primitive Christianity. Our colleges are imparting a Christian education, and exerting a direct, as well as indirect, Christian influence on the country.

There have been exceptions. But they are rapidly passing away. The University of South Carolina almost expired under the presidency of Dr. Cooper. A Christian president was found necessary to save it from extinction. The University of Virginia could not be sustained on the infidel basis, where it was placed by its founder, Mr. Jefferson. It now stands on the Christian platform. And Christian men,— Christian ministers in all but the name, — now teach, and virtually preach, Christian truth to those orphan children, whom Stephen Girard resolved to place forever beyond the reach of religion. There may be exceptions still. But expe-

Digitized by Google

rience and analogy forbid the supposition that they will be lasting. College education in our country is to be, and for the most part is, Christian education.

There is a kindred thought, or a counterpart fact, touching our theological seminaries, which we have also contemplated often with great satisfaction. They are in the hands of men of sanctified Christian scholarship. With few exceptions, the presidents and professors not only hail with hearty welcome the advances which others are making in literature and science, in the constitution of society, and the arts of life; but themselves contribute with untiring industry to the advancement of learning, and the progress of mankind. They edit scholarly editions of the classics, prepare grammars and other excellent text-books for the academy and the college, and in all suitable ways, with the tongue and the pen, stimulate the youth of the country to the diligent prosecution of classical studies, as being the proper study of mankind, and keeping alive the sacred tradition of the moral and intellectual life of the human race. They conduct able Quarterlies, some fraught with the weighty lore of antiquity and of foreign lands, others full of stirring articles pertaining directly to our own country and our own times. They study the philosophy of Greece and Italy, of Germany and Scotland, of the East and the West, of the ancients and the moderns; and the result is seen in the enlargement and improvement of metaphysical and ethical, not less than theological, science. They make themselves masters of many tongues, investigate the nature and use of language, and contribute to the rapid progress of comparative philology, and the young, but growing and interesting, kindred science of ethnology. They labor to subserve, as they have opportunity, the cause not only of sacred, but of general geography, chronology, and history. Now and then, one of them may have taken up an ill-judged and ill-grounded prejudice against some of the recent physical sciences,—a prejudice too nearly akin to that which the popes, cardinals, doctors, and inquisitors of the Catholic Church arrayed against the astronomical discoveries of Galileo and Copernicus; yet on the whole it may be doubted, whether any class of men is more ready to embrace

Digitized by Google

all the truth which God reveals, whether in his works or in his Word, and to hold it as true and of course harmonious, than the teachers in our theological seminaries. And though, for the most part, conservative in politics and morals, as in religion, yet they are ever to be found in the foremost ranks on the side of temperance, of peace, of liberty, of humanity, of rational reform and progress in every good cause.

There may be exceptions. But they must be few and far between. And they are likely to be fewer, for a theological seminary that sets itself against learning and progress, — nay, that does not aid or further them, — cannot stand.

Now these facts are as they should be, in their relation to each other. Learning and religion are co-workers. They mutually illustrate and support each other; and so should the institutions, which are severally devoted to them. A literary institution that is not, in deed, as well as in word, dedicated to "Christ and the Church," fails to seek its worthiest and noblest end. And a theological seminary that does not foster learning, fails to use its most appropriate means of good.

Again; these facts are full of promise to the rising destinies of our country. We exult in them as pledges, (so far as they go,) of the perpetuity of our free institutions, of which education and religion are the pillars. We contemplate them with patriotic pride, as shedding a lustre on our country, infinitely transcending the glory of the most brilliant military achievements. We dwell on them with devout gratitude also, as we trust, to Him whose hand is so visible in all the stages of American history.

They illustrate well the safety and efficiency of the voluntary system. They strike us with surprise! Familiar as we are with the admirable working of this system, we could not have foreseen, we should not have dared to predict, so gratifying a result. How, then, must these facts surprise and confound the advocates of State-churches, and still more the champions of hierarchy and legitimacy, in the Old World! Our colleges and theological seminaries are, for the most part, distinct from each other; and separate from the direct control of either the Church or the State. At the same time, almost without exception, they are in the hands of Christian

Digitized by Google

patriots and scholars, who wield all their potent influences for the welfare of both Church and State with a harmony and energy, which may safely challenge comparison with the venerable establishments of the Old World. And they do this, we might add, with a steadfast adherence to Protestant Christianity, and a consistent carrying out of its pure principles to their proper results, which contrast to great advantage with the retrograde and Rome-ward movement of one at least of the time-honored universities of our mother country. Let our literary and theological institutions continue to increase in moral and physical resources, as they have done, especially within a few years when they have become to so great an extent the heirs and depositaries of the superfluous wealth of our best men, and let them still cherish as they have, the religious principles and spirit of our pious ancestry: and two hundred years hence, what a spectacle of moral beauty will they be in the eyes of the world, and what an engine of moral power,—and that, a power only, or chiefly, to do good!

In conclusion, we cannot but remark upon the sacred duty, which rests upon American patriots and Christians, to cherish those institutions, to protect them in the enjoyment of their rights and privileges, to enlarge their means of usefulness so as to keep pace with the growing wealth and population of the country, to foster in them at once the growth of piety and the advancement of learning, to keep them as good as they are, and make them as much better as they can be. Especially let them have, so long as they deserve it, the public confidence. Let no prejudice be countenanced against them, as cloistered, or aristocratic, or in any way selfish, or separate in their interest from the welfare of the community. Let no man do them the injustice to consider them as rivals to common schools on the one hand, or to church organizations on the other; but rather as ministers and coadjutors to both. Interwoven as they are, with the whole system of education and religion in our country, the entire fabric will stand or fall, will be built up or sink into decay, with them. Eminently popular in their constitution and spirit, they well deserve the confidence and support of the whole people.

Digitized by Google

CANADA.

What is the history of Canada? What is to be its future? The answer to the first question is easy;— that to the last is more difficult. Let us first consider the easy, and then pass to the more difficult and absorbing, question.

Canada was discovered by the French, in the fourteenth century, and was settled by them in 1608, two hundred and forty-one years ago, and just twelve years before the band of the Mayflower moored their bark, and stepped upon Plymouth Rock. England acquired Canada from the French in 1763, and has retained it from that day to this.

The name Canada, is derived from Kanata, a word which, in the language of the Iroquois Indians, signifies a collection of huts. Canada embraces a territory of three hundred and fifty thousand square miles in area, which is fifty times larger than Massachusetts, and equal to New England, and the Middle States, added to Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and Ohio; or a region of country larger than the thirteen original States of our Union. And this country is by no means to be reckoned merely by miles and acres. It is not a barren waste, but a region generally more fertile than New England. The soil on its numerous rivers is very fine for agricultural purposes, and its wide-stretching forests will make lumber one of the chief articles of export for centuries to come, as it has been in all its past history.

Nature has done much for Canada. It is true, that while it has the latitude of France, it has the climate of Sweden; still it is not an unhealthy climate. Though it is too severe for certain crops, it is not unfavorable to most crops raised in New England. The cold in winter is frequently extreme, and the heat of summer extreme also; yet, on the whole, it will compare favorably as to climate with the neighboring States. Indeed, much of Canada is not situated in so high a latitude as northern New England. There is but one exception to the public health of Canada; and that is the per-centage of persons deaf and dumb, blind, idiotic, and lunatic, which is greater than in any other part of the world.

Digitized by Google

There are, at the present time, forty thousand lunatics and idiots in Canada. The great number of this class of the unfortunate has never been satisfactorily accounted for.

The lakes and rivers of Canada are hardly surpassed in the world. The St. Lawrence is the second river in North America. It courses two thousand miles from Lake Superior to the Gulf. It receives in various parts of its course, six or eight names, and fifteen or twenty tributaries. Its width is from one mile to one hundred and fifty. Ships of six hundred tons ascend its waters to Montreal. This river might become as important to the commerce of our North-Western States, as to Canada itself. The water-power on the various rivers of Canada, is stated to be vast enough for a continent. When the cities of Boston and Montreal are connected by a road of iron, as they will speedily be, the Yankee nation of manufacturers will not confine its operations to the waters of the Merrimac, the Blackstone, the Saco, and others, but their sound will be heard upon the banks of the Ottawa, and the Richelieu, and along the mighty St. Lawrence.

The entire population of Canada is only about a million and a half; or, less than that of single States in our Union. During our Revolution, its population was but seventy thousand. The people are about equally divided between Canada East, and Canada West. Of this people, those of English and French origin are nearly equal; and the country has been kept in a state of effervescence for a long period, by the strifes between the rival races.

The people in Canada are mostly farmers and lumbermen, and live scattered upon their farms, and amid their perpetual forests. About a hundred and forty thousand of the Canadians live in cities. Of these, fifty thousand reside in Montreal. A late Scotch traveller in the New World, has termed this city more like European cities, than any he has visited in North America. Quebec is the other chief city of Canada East, numbering forty thousand inhabitants, and celebrated for its military importance, and as the place of shipment of an immense amount of lumber. The cities of Canada West, are Toronto, with twenty thousand inhabitants, St. John's, with eighteen thousand, and Kingston with the same.

Digitized by Google

It is scarcely necessary to say that Canada is, and always has been, under the prevailing influence of the Roman Catholic religion, and that this influence, with an endowed hierarchy, and monastic establishments, together with the feudal system, as it regards the tenures of Canadian estates, have served, as the same influences have elsewhere served, to keep the masses in ignorance, to repress civil and religious liberty, to paralyze the enterprise of the country, and to diminish the incitements to industry.

But the Canadians are not to sleep forever. Already many of the people are awake. They have watched with deep interest the prosperity of the neighboring States. They have studied the causes of this prosperity. They have, moreover, become sick of everlasting discord among themselves, and with the colonial policy of Great Britain. Hence the recent and earnest appeal of many influential Canadians, in behalf of annexation to the United States.

So much for Canada as it has been, and as it is. We come now to consider a matter that is involved in more difficulty. What is to be the destiny of Canada, together with that of the other British Provinces, (for their destiny is, no doubt, to be one,) in North America? We hesitate not to express our belief, that Canada, with New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, etc., will become portions of our own already great Union. Our reasons for this judgment are briefly these. Canada will not long remain subject to Great Britain, as a colony. Past and recent events seem to demonstate this. The population is increasing. The ties that bind the Province to Great Britain are giving way, and such as unite its interests with those of the States are growing stronger every day. Besides, Great Britain is tired of its troublesome offspring; and begins to think that it is of age, and had better set up for itself. The London Times, the leading British journal, and other influential prints, seem to be quite content with a prospective loss of Canada, provided, only, that British shipping may play freely in the waters about Newfoundland, in the Gulf, and at the mouth of the St. Lawrence.

A Canadian writer, who is evidently a great loyalist, urges, in a late number of Blackwood's Magazine, that Canada

Digitized by Google

should become a part of Great Britain, as Ireland now is, and should thus be represented in Parliament. But John Bull will never consent to that. Besides, if it were granted, it would not be what Canada needs. The country would always be oppressed, as Ireland has been.

The only remaining theory save the one of annexation, worthy of notice, that has been advanced, is the following. Let Canada and the other British Provinces in North America, strike for a separation from Great Britain, as did our colonies in seventy-six, — peaceably, if possible, — and become an independent Republic. But there are both internal and external difficulties in the way of this plausible theory. In the first place, Canada is too weak to become a Republic against British resistance, for the Province has only half of the men that our colonies had, at the breaking out of the Revolutionary War. Besides, the influence of the Roman Catholic religion has rendered the Canadians less able to contend, than did the bracing principles of Protestantism, that nerved the progeny of the Pilgrim Fathers. Then, again, if Canada could start her ship of State without resistance from abroad, the conflicts between citizens at home, originating from two rival nations, and about equal in numbers, would be certain to run her aground.

What are the reasons for believing that the annexation theory is sounder than the others? In the first place, the Canadians of influence and wealth, the owners of real estate, as well as the mercantile interest, are very generally in favor of the annexation of Canada to the United States. Several influential journals are out in favor of the doctrine. These prints circulate amongst, and greatly influence, the people. There are many men from the States located in Canada, and many more will be carried there, by the iron horse; all of whom will be in favor of annexation, from home sympathies, and from pecuniary interests. An intelligent British traveller, who has lately written home, after having weighed the influences in Canada, in favor of this doctrine, expresses the full belief that annexation must take place, and that in the course of a few years. In the next place, there is almost every natural reason to suppose, if there is to be a great change in

Digitized by Google

Canada, that nothing else will occur but a union with its near neighbors, with whom the Canadians have lived so long in peace. The Province borders upon the United States, is to be connected with it by several railroads, and its principal river would be convenient for the commerce of several of the States. The entire Canadas are nearer to Washington than are some of our States, and very much nearer than prospective States, now rising in our more distant territories. Indeed, both Montreal and Quebec are nearer to Boston, than the city of Buffalo, that seems so near us. Has not nature formed Canada to make a part of our Union? Our young men go to the far West, to California, and to Oregon, because they think New England is crowded. Many of them would rather go to Canada, to find vent for their energies, if American laws and institutions could precede them. The commercial relations of the two countries, almost force them into one.

We must add one word, as to the moral and religious bearing of this question.

The Canadians have been afflicted, for centuries, with a religion which would have made the apostle say to them, as he did to the Athenians of old: "I perceive that in all things, ye are too superstitious." By a recent estimate, one sixth of the adult inhabitants of Canada, were unable to read. At first thought, we may dread to receive such a people to our bosom; yet we are doing it every day, by bidding thousands of foreigners welcome to our shores. We did it in admitting Texas, California, and New Mexico to our Union. Shall our compassions fail, when Canada comes into view? Shall we love utter aliens and foreigners, and not receive those to our affections, who are manifesting such an interest in us, and in our institutions? Having loved our distant Southwestern and Pacific neighbors, let us love as much, our nearer Northern neighbors. Let us receive them, when they are ready to join us, and when Great Britain is ready quietly to give them up. Let us send them the New England schoolmaster and Home Missionary, hand in hand; and Canada may become another New England, in intelligence and religion, and add stars of glory to our national constellation, making us an increasing light to the nations.

Digitized by Google

FIGURATIVE CHARACTER OF THE BIBLE.

In communicating his instructions, our blessed Lord had frequent occasion to use figurative language; — "He spake many things in parables." With little qualification, the same remark may be extended to most of the inspired writers; so that the Bible is, to a great extent, a figurative book, abounding with the loftiest and noblest figures of speech. Is the conclusion to be drawn from this fact, that the Bible does not mean anything? Or that men may safely put upon it just what meaning they please?

With inferences such as these, not a few are endeavoring to quiet themselves in unbelief and sin. When met with a passage which, contravening their views or wishes, administers a reproof to their errors or corruptions, enjoins a duty they are unwilling to perform, or points them to future scenes which they choose to disregard; they are ready to say at once, This is figurative! As though a figurative expression could not mean anything; or, as though they were authorized to put that meaning upon it, which may best comport with their opinions or inclinations. But, is this a just conclusion from the figurative character of the sacred writings? By no means. The farthest from it imaginable.

Our standard authors on rhetoric tell us, that "figures serve to give *new scope* and *power* to language, rendering it capable of expressing the nicest shades and colors of thought, which no language could possibly do without them. Figures, they say, "give us, frequently, a much *clearer* and *more striking* view of a subject than we could have of it, were it expressed in simple terms. They render an abstract conception in some degree an object of sense. They surround it with such circumstances as enable the mind to lay hold of it steadily, and contemplate it fully." On this account, figures "are very properly said to *illustrate* a subject, or to *throw light* upon it." All the rhetoricians, ancient and modern, express the same sentiment. Indeed, they could express no other, consistently with truth, and with the common apprehensions and practice of men. Figurative language

Digitized by Google

is so easy and common, that it may not improperly be called the language of nature. There is much of it in the Bible. But is the Bible, on this account, the less interesting, the less impressive, the less distinct and explicit? Not at all, but the more so; and vastly the more. The Bible was written in this sort of language, because it was the most proper language which could have been used; and because, from the nature of many of the subjects revealed and illustrated, it was the only language in which it could possibly have been written.

Some of the *prophetic* language of Scripture may be the less plain, on account of its highly figurative character. For it seems to have been designed, that the prophecies should not be minutely understood, until after their accomplishment. As they were intended, not so much to make prognosticators of us, as to confirm our faith after their fulfilment, they are wisely hung around with shadows which a fulfilling providence can alone remove. But with regard to the inspired writings generally, we maintain that they are more plain and impressive, than though they had been given us in bare and literal terms. And if any one doubts this, let him take for example, one of the parables of our Saviour, and strip it of its figurative dress, and put the moral of it into the simplest language he can use, and see if it has lost nothing of its beauty, interest, and force. Let him take some of the figurative representations of the future world, and strip them of the solemn garb in which the Holy Spirit has seen proper to invest them, and see if he can exhibit the idea as forcibly, if indeed, he can exhibit it at all, in a more literal expression.

Every one must be aware of the efforts which are continually made, in conversation, in sermons, and in books, to set aside the solemn annunciations of the Bible, on the ground that they are figurative. When, for example, we refer to the Scriptural account of the fall of our first parents, and the consequent sin and ruin of their posterity, we are not unfrequently met with a smile of mingled incredulity and contempt, — and from those, too, who profess to believe the Bible, — on the ground that the representations on this subject are all figurative; — myths, allegories, fables, never designed to be interpreted literally.

Digitized by Google

So when we refer to the numerous passages which set forth the human heart as entirely depraved, destitute of holiness, and dead in sin; numbers satisfy themselves with saying, that the language on this subject is highly figurative, and that the hyperbolical and strained imagery of the Orientals requires a very free interpretation.

When we speak to those around us, of the necessity of regeneration, saying to them, in the very language of Christ, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" not unfrequently the reply is made, This expression, cannot be literally understood; it must be figurative; and who can tell what explanation shall be given of it? The new birth may be nothing more than baptism,— or a change of religious profession,— or a gradual outward reformation. Various significations have been given to the words; and it is impossible to determine, without a new revelation, what their meaning is!

The numerous passages which speak of the atonement, are by many disposed of in the same manner. Christ, is said, in the Scriptures, to have "borne our sins," to have "suffered for our sins," to have "died for our sins," to have been "the propitiation for our sins," and to have "shed his blood for the remission of sins." These passages seem plain to pious minds, and the sentiment conveyed by them is precious and glorious. But there are those who cannot understand them. They are symbolical, figurative, shadowy, referring to "the perished peculiarities of a former dispensation and age." Of course, they can be, and ought to be, explained away.

There are numerous passages in the Bible, which speak most expressly of the existence and agency of fallen spirits. Indeed, we have as much evidence, from the language of Scripture, of the existence of fallen angels, as of holy angels, or, as we have of the existence of wicked men. But, there are those to whom this doctrine is utterly incredible, and the passages which speak of it go for nothing, on the ground that they are figurative. Satan is but "the personified principle of evil," and his angels are the evil dispositions which prevail, more or less, in the hearts of men.

Digitized by Google

Some of the most striking and awful representations of the Bible are those which refer to the last great day,—the day of judgment. But it has been discovered that the day of judgment is an absurdity; and that the passages which prove it are explained away, on the ground that they, too, are figurative. They refer to the destruction of Jerusalem; or to what has been called "the judgment of souls," the spiritual judgment, which every person, sooner or later, in this world or the next, will form, respecting his own character.

But no passages have been more sadly perverted, on the ground of their being figurative, than those which relate to the future and endless punishment of the wicked. These passages are very numerous, and they are fearfully plain. But in the estimation of many, they are not plain. The doctrine of eternal punishment is too horrible to be believed, and it cannot be that God has revealed it. The passages which speak of it are clearly figurative; they may mean something else; and we may lawfully exercise our ingenuity upon them to explain them away.

We refer to these important Christian doctrines, for the purpose of shewing, in one view, the extent of the evil of which we complain. Advantage is taken of the figurative character of the Bible, to make it speak anything or nothing, just as ingenious but unsanctified men prefer.

But, as has been shewn, those to whom we here refer, mistake entirely, the nature and use of figurative language. Figures are not designed to cover up and weaken the sentiment of a discourse, and render it ambiguous; but rather to illustrate the sentiment, and bring it out more distinctly. The laws, too, by which figurative language is to be interpreted are, in general, as well understood, and as easy of application, as those for the interpretation of literal language.

We need not, then, go over again with the several doctrines which have been mentioned, examine the passages by which they are supported, and decide whether they are to be understood literally or figuratively. It is not material, in the present discussion, which way they are understood. If literal, then they mean just what they say, according to the strictest sense of the terms; and they actually prove all that they are

Digitized by Google

properly quoted and applied to prove. Or, if we suppose these passages to be figurative, still they have a meaning, and a meaning, for the most part, more plainly and strongly expressed, than it could be in any other manner.

In order to give definiteness and point to these remarks, let us apply them to a single case; for example, to the passages commonly relied on to prove the doctrine of eternal punishment. Now if these passages are to be understood literally, it will not be denied that they establish the point for which they are quoted and applied. Or, if they are figurative, *why*, — let us seriously ask, — Why are they made figurative? Why are such figures, — the undying worm, the devouring fire, the everlasting burnings, the blackness of darkness, the lake burning with fire, from which a smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, — why are these dread figures used? Why is the most appalling and terrible imagery of nature drawn together, in describing the future destiny of the wicked? Is it to shew that there will be no future punishment? Or is it to envelope the subject in such dense clouds and darkness, that nothing can be known respecting it? Or is it not rather to *enforce* the subject, make it more plain and striking, and place it before unthinking mortals, in a way to arrest their attention and affect their hearts? Were not these awful figures used, because literal language fell entirely below the subject, and was too poor to make an adequate representation of the dread reality? What an infatuated perversion of language must it be, to conclude, as many do, from the fact that some of these representations are figurative, that they mean nothing; or, if anything, that nobody can pretend to determine what their meaning is. Alas! God will soon teach such trifiers that the figurative language of his Word *has* a meaning, and that had they not been blinded by the stupefying power of sin, they must have seen it.

Various are the artifices resorted to by those who do not love the truth, to take from us the Holy Bible. Some would reject it altogether, as an imposition; but more would prefer to have the name and the credit of receiving it, while, on the ground of its figurative character, they root out of it almost every thing which renders it valuable. But let us not con-

Digitized by Google

sent to part with the Bible in this way. It *is* that "sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts." It is, in general, a *plain book*. It may be easily understood, at least, as to all the essential purposes of religion. It discloses to us what we are, and what we must be; what God has done for us, and what we must do for ourselves, if we would be saved. It goes with us beyond where the eye of sense can penetrate, or the lamp of reason shine. It dispels the darkness of the tomb, and sheds its cheering light over the regions of futurity. In his Word, God draws aside the impenetrable curtain, which separates this from the other world, and exhibits to us the bursting tombs, the enthroned Judge, the melting elements and burning worlds. He reveals to us both heaven, and hell; and teaches us what we must be and do, in order to escape the one, and enjoy the other.

What, then, could we do,—situated as we are here on probation, with death, judgment, and eternity, but a little way before us,—*what could we do without the Bible?* Without it, spiritual darkness would literally cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; as it does, in fact, cover those portions of the earth, where the Bible is not known. But this heavenly light *may* be withdrawn from us, as it has been withdrawn from many regions which it once illumined. And it may be withdrawn, we should well remember, not only by the rude hand of the avowed infidel, but by the insidious glosses of the false critic and interpreter. It may be withdrawn by him who would persuade us, because the language of Scripture is to some extent figurative, that therefore, it has no definite meaning, but every one is entitled to put that sense upon it which to him appears the most convenient and agreeable. But let us not be cheated out of our Bible, and deluded to destruction, in this way. The figurative character of the sacred Word is no disparagement to it, but rather its glory. Without detracting at all from its plainness, it imparts an intensity of expression, which without it could not otherwise be possessed. Let us then cling to this sacred book, as the charter of our inheritance.

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

DIFFICULTIES OF EDITORSHIP. — The life of an editor, no doubt, has its pleasures, as well as its almost intolerable perplexities and drudgeries. Yet no one would covet it, if aware of the difficulties of such a station. The editor may seem to the uninitiated, to be galloping gaily on his prancing nag; but to himself, it seems more like "riding through a thorn-bush on a hedge-hog's back." No man finds it more difficult to shun mistake; no man is sooner taught that "to err is human."

These melancholy meditations are suggested to us, not wholly by sad experience, but by observing the sea of troubles through which our hardy brethren of the New York "Independent" have been sailing during their brief cruise. They started fair, in first-rate trim, and tip-top spirits, with smooth seas and bright skies. But scarcely had they got off soundings, when they encountered a succession of back-flaws, cross seas, squalls, breakers, and collisions, in comparison with which the weathering of Cape Horn is but a pleasure-trip. They began with professing, that they were about to exhibit a courtesy and liberality heretofore unknown to their orthodox brethren of the editorial fraternity. They were going to win right over to the truth a multitude of Unitarians anxiously waiting for a chance to be converted, which the stiff orthodox ministers in and around Boston would not give them. But forthwith they provoked the hoarsest murmurs of the gentle "Inquirer," at New York; while they maddened the "Christian Register," at Boston, almost to the murder-point on the thermometer of wrath. Their controversy with the latter paper, which they silenced, because its editor would not argue on such strong compulsion, was singularly keen and bitter. There has also been a sharp paroxysm between them and the ably-conducted "Journal," of New Hampshire, though the only matters in dispute came under the head of "editorial courtesy." Their contentions with certain officers of the American Tract Society were "like the bars of a castle." And, to mention no more of their unhappy feuds and frays, they are now involved in a most unmitigated warfare with the New School Presbyterian body, and its organs, the New York "Presbyterian," and the Philadelphia "Observer." Never did men get rougher handling than the brisk editors of the Independent; and all for nothing but freely speaking their own minds, as they supposed, in the most good-natured style imaginable. We, also, could have it in our hearts to "pick a very pretty quarrel" with them, for their want of frankness and orthodox integrity in the matter of Dr. Bushnell. They have not ventured to take his part, any further than by treating with disrepect all his critics and reviewers. But seeing them so hardly beset by other and fiercer assailants, we forbear to take them in hand, except for the purpose of using them as examples of the difficulties of editorship, under the most favorable circumstances. Surely, he who breaks the tenth commandment while eyeing the editor's chair, commits a mortal sin against his own happiness and peace.

Digitized by Google

TORREY'S TRANSLATION OF NEANDER.— The third volume of this truly great performance has appeared. Of all the living Germans we like Neander the best. His learning is stupendous, and his skill in the use of it is amazing, while an earnest and devout spirit pervades his innumerable pages. If he had the same discrimination in regard to the doctrines of Christianity, which he manifests in respect to its external and internal history, and as to the character and sentiments of historical personages, we could ask no more. He is, perhaps, as evangelical as any man can be, who is not soundly orthodox. He is so near the mark, that he seems the more inexcusable for not coming fully up to it; and hence his aberrations are the more vexatious. Yet some of his excrescences act as a counterpoise to others. Thus, for instance, it would seem that nothing prevents him from opposing the baptism of infants and the institution of the gospel ministry, but his Erastianism; or his State-church doctrine, that these matters may properly be regulated by human legislation or prescription. With his views of the import of the Bible, he would almost necessarily be a radical, if he held to plenary inspiration. Few readers in New England will be likely to study his great work, except such as are sufficiently instructed and established in the faith to be secure from his misleading influences. With all his defects, and they are neither few nor small, his merits are far greater than his faults; and we can truly say, that we highly prize and deeply love Neander.

MEMOIR OF PROFESSOR FISKE.— Dr. Humphrey, who has been by his various publications, as well as his official life, one of the greatest benefactors of the Church of God in our times, has done one of his best services to the Christian public, in the preparation of this volume. To him, it has been a "labor of love;" and such labors are the chief pleasures of life. May it be long before any friend shall be called to discharge the same office for the excellent author; and whenever performed, may it be as fondly and faithfully done. We had always held the lamented Fiske in high admiration; but now his character opens upon us in a celestial beauty. That which was a fair and pleasing picture by day, now that the night of death has come over it, is changed at once into a bright transparency, luminous with its inward and undying fire. We rejoice that the striking record of his conversion is preserved. Would that it might be read and pondered by all who are mere naturalists on the subject of regeneration. The detached extracts from the journal of his voyage to the "holy city," where he met a holy death, are brilliant gems; and deepen our regret that the mind which yielded them is like a mine that can be wrought no more. But the buried treasures are reserved to enrich a brighter world. These passages are so much above the deceased Professor's usual range of expression, as to remind us of the remark made by Sir Thomas Brown: "It is observed that men sometimes, upon the eve of their departure, do speak and reason above themselves; for then the soul begins to be freed from the ligaments of the body, and to discourse in a strain above mortality." Strange effect of disease, as it shakes down the frail tabernacle of the flesh. The imprisoned spirit, about to break from its confinement, becomes almost

Digitized by Google

inspired and prophetic. This sentiment is well given in the verse of Edmund Waller: —

> "The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
> Lets in new light through chinks that time has made.
> Stronger by weakness, wiser men become,
> As they draw near to their eternal home;
> Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
> That stand upon the threshold of the new."

It was a benignant Providence that led this pilgrim to close his journey at the city, and to make his last bed by the tomb, of David. The frail tenement barely held together, till he reached the hill of Zion. His active mind, to the very last, was eager to observe and learn, though struggling under the weakness and pains of approaching dissolution,

> "And soon from its cell of clay,
> To burst a seraph in the blaze of day."

ZOOLOGICAL TEMPERANCE CONVENTION. — The Amherst men are manifesting of late a very commendable literary activity. Scarcely had we despatched to the printer, for our last number, a notice of President Hitchcock's exquisite sermons on the phenomena of the seasons, when we received another little volume from his pen, as unlike the other as can be imagined. This beautifully illustrated book, fitly dedicated to John Tappan, Esq., that old, tried, and true friend of Temperance, is the finest thing in the allegorical line, which has appeared since the famous days of "Deacon Giles' Distillery." It represents the beasts as assembled at a convention in Central Africa, under the presidency of the lion; and discussing the expediency of imitating the "humans," by adopting from them the use of intoxicating drinks. It abounds in playful satire, in broad farce, and in delicate touches of wit; as well as in shrewd sense and curious information. We are bent on making a tour to Amherst College, for the express purpose of viewing the remains of *Dominus Mus Rattus Albus*, preserved in their Zoological Museum with all the pious care which embalmed the pussies, whose mummies are so numerous in the *catacombs* of Egypt. To those who only know President Hitchcock as a man of "modest worth," appearing almost like demureness, this diverting and instructive book will turn out the "silver lining" of his soul, in a streak of unexpected brightness and hilarity.

RESTRAINING GRACE. — When a whole community is agitated by the report of some deed of horror, — as when a wealthy and distinguished citizen is secretly hewn to pieces, within walls sacred to the science which seeks the preservation of human life, — we are made to see what man is capable of, and to wonder that a world inhabited by such beings is not more filled with violence and blood. That the world is not turned into an absolute pandemonium by the deep depravity of its inhabitants, is only owing to the secret restraining grace of Him who said to the Philistine king: "I also withheld thee from sinning against me." So strong and so constant is this secret

Digitized by Google

influence, that men would not know what is in them, nor down what pitch of crime they are capable of plunging; unless, at intervals, God left some of them to themselves, to act out the impulses of their guilty imaginations. The mighty restraints of divine grace are not so gratefully appreciated as they should be; or we would not think it strange that a good old Connecticut patriarch should exclaim, while returning thanks at the table: "We bless Thee, that we are neither under the gallows, nor in hell!" That any man should go down to the grave, unsubdued by temptation, and without making ship-wreck of character, is little short of a miracle of mercy.

THE SPEAKERSHIP.— The condition in which the national government has been placed, with its wheels completely trigged, because the House of Representatives cannot organize itself, reminds us of a saying which passed current as a proverb in our early days, "All goes to Congress!" This phrase indicated the lack of discrimination too often seen in the selection of the men, to whom the destinies of the country are committed so far as they are consigned to human hands. Our hope for the Union is now, as ever, not in Congress, but in the God of our fathers. The present may seem to be a most perilous crisis; but if there is any patriotism in the hearts of our legislators, and this emergency should be the occasion of calling it into action, it will be a most desirable crisis. Every man among us who has lived to middle age, has seen repeated occasions when it seemed certainly all over with the Union. But those occasions have passed by, and left the Constitution stronger than ever. Let only the Christians among us *be* Christians, and act and pray as such, and the almighty providence of God will either perpetuate the existing Union, or re-arrange it on some better plan.

A FAITHFUL MAN.— Michael Wigglesworth, the second pastor of Malden, was ordained over that Church in 1655, and died, full of years and honors, in 1705. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Increase Mather; and printed under the title, "A Faithful Man Described and Rewarded." A battered copy of this antiquated discourse having lately come to light, it has been reprinted at the expense of a few individuals, and gratuitously distributed throughout that ancient town. It is almost the noblest performance of the kind which has ever fallen under our notice; and its value is greatly enhanced by an appendix, consisting of a few extracts from the private devotional papers of the pious author of the "Day of Doom," and other poems. From the whole, we may form an idea of the inner life, and outward deportment, of the Puritans of the first generation born on the New England soil. This pamphlet fully confirms the common belief, that they were very holy men, distinguished by exalted spirituality and a certain divine elevation of soul.

DYER ON PLENARY INSPIRATION.— It is but lately, that this little treatise has come into our hands. It is a very unpretending affair; and is a modest attempt to prove, that he who holds the writers of the Bible to have been truly inspired by God, is bound on their

Digitized by Google

testimony, to regard their inspiration as full and complete. A certain very able Quarterly, passing by some tall and terrible theological sinners in its own neighborhood, has pounced upon our innocent friend, and stricken him very sore for not doing what he did not design to do. We must "set down our foot" that we will "interpose an armed neutrality" for his protection; and hereby accommodate to the case the proclamation in Ariosto's Orlando Furioso:

> "Let none but him these boots displace
> Who dares Orlando's fury face!"

TRINITARIANISM.— We have read a most curious pamphlet on this subject, by Rev. G. F. Simmons, minister of the Unitarian Society at Springfield. He seems to hold the Sabellian scheme as it has been modified by Schleiermacher, and as lately maintained among us by Dr. Bushnell, in his book called "God in Christ." According to this view, God reveals himself in the Scriptures after the fashion of a three-fold personality,— or rather, a triple personation, as Father, Son, and Spirit, and in each is truly and properly divine. But these revealments are only apparitions, so to speak. They are not real persons, but only appearances; and these appearances furnish no proof of an ontological Trinity, or an eternal three-foldness in the actual mode of the divine existence. In other words, the apparent Trinity existing in the Divine unity is but an appearance arbitrarily assumed for the purpose of "dramatizing" God; and has no foundation in the essential facts of the Divine nature. It is but the trinity of a king in a tragedy, sitting on his throne in the exercise of his civil authority, next walking *incognito* the streets of his capital, and then riding as a warrior at the head of his host. The shadows cast by a tree in the morning, at noon-day, and toward sunset, must differ in their outlines from each other, and from the tree itself; though there can be only one tree. Yet if we see three distinct shadows *at one time*, we know that there must be three trees to cast them. Now this is the case with the persons in the Godhead. As seen in the Scriptures, we often see two of these appearances at once, and often the three together; as when it is said that, through Christ we have access by one Spirit to the Father; or as when we are commanded to baptize in the name of the sacred Three.

Under these circumstances we assert, that the appearances are not shams, nor disguises, such as are assumed by the actor of what is called, in "dramatic" phrase, a "mono-poly-logue," wherein a single actor appears in several characters. The doctrine which maintains that these appearances are mere semblances, having no foundation in the reality of the Divine nature, is infinitely derogatory to the dignity of the Creator, and to his truth. If the one God, as is confessed, reveals himself in three apparently distinct persons, then these appearances are proofs positive and all-sufficient as to a foundation for them in his very being. Even if it could be imagined without blasphemy, that God, for benevolent purposes, would choose to delude the eyes of his poor creatures by assuming deceptive appearances,— having no power to save them from sin by any other means,— it is

Digitized by Google

certain that none of them would be able to see through and expose the "gracious fraud." But it is impossible for God to lie. He is, what in his Word he reveals himself to be, three persons in one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory. This doctrine, however mysterious in some aspects of it, is eminently practical, is fundamental to the whole plan and process of salvation from sin, and is alone consistent with the truth of Scripture and of God.

As to the gentleman whose tract has called forth these remarks, we cannot but love and pity him. There is something sweet and endearing in his beautiful and affecting language, and in the devout and winning spirit he manifests. He lacks courage, as yet, to enter boldly into the fulness of saving truth. But there has been awakened in his soul a deep sense of those moral wants, which crave for their appeasing the whole work of the guardian Father, the redeeming Christ, and the quickening Spirit. It is our earnest prayer, that these wants may grow upon him, and leave him no rest by night or day, till he shall come to the full fruition of the mercies of the baptismal covenant; and receive the blessings of the Father, and the blessings of the Son, and the blessings of the Holy Ghost.

ORDINATIONS.

Oct.	2.	Mr. D. W. Marsh, at Dalton, Ms., as a Missionary.
"	25.	Mr. O. T. Lanphear, Derby, Vt.
"	31.	Mr. A. B. Dunlap, at Lima, Mich., as an Evangelist.
Nov.	7.	Mr. C. L. Woodworth, Second Church, Amherst, Ms.
"	"	Mr. Edward H. Greeley, Haverhill, N. H.
"	8.	Mr. Samuel G. Willard, Willimantic, Conn.
"	22.	Mr. I. E. Dwinnell, Colleague Pastor, South Church, Salem.
Dec.	12.	Mr. T. F. Clary, Thetford, Vt.
"	"	Mr. Jason Morse, Brimfield, Ms.

INSTALLATIONS.

Oct.	24.	Rev. J. H. Benton, Clinton, Lenawee Co., Michigan.
Nov.	1.	Rev. Edward Cleveland, Cabot, Vt.
"	7.	Rev. J. Guernsey, Derby, Conn.
"	"	Rev. A. S. Swift, Plainfield and Marshfield, Vt.
"	13.	Rev. H. O. Schermerhorn, Fourth Cong. Church, New York City.
"	14.	Rev. William Warren, Upton, Ms.
"	15.	Rev. H. G. Park, Burlington, Ms.
"	21.	Rev. Charles A. Downs, Lebanon, N. H.
Dec.	5.	Rev. E. W. Gilman, First Cong. Church, Lockport, N. Y.
"	"	Rev. Daniel R. Cady, Westboro, Ms.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Nov. 27. Rev. Austin Carey, Sunderland, Ms., æ. 40.

Digitized by Google

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY

FOR 1850.....VOL. IV.

THE original Editor of this Work, on resuming his former relation to it as its only responsible conductor, wishes to return his warm thanks to those numerous friends who have heretofore aided the work by their communications, or by their personal influence in its behalf. He would especially render his thanks to those brethren, with whom he was united in carrying it on during the past year. He can now, with propriety, testify to the laboriousness, zeal, and punctuality, with which they fulfilled the duty assigned them; and to the gratifying unanimity which has marked all their proceedings, though every variety of theological sentiment recognized among the Orthodox was represented in their number. The present Editor feels that he has derived the most essential and permanent benefit from his intimate association with them through the labors of that year; and is happy in being permitted to rely on their aid and advice, as future occasion may require. It will be his endeavor, that the work shall continue to exhibit, as it has done, the Orthodoxy of New England. Important as may be the points disputed among us as brethren, they are of far less consequence than the grand doctrines of the Cross on which all are substantially agreed, and the opposing errors which on every side rise up against the common faith. Any attempt to array the peaceful and united churches of Massachusetts, or other States, into rival schools or hostile factions, is to be deprecated with the utmost earnestness.

We do not wish to have any more of controversy on our pages than may be necessary for due interest and instruction in the questions of the day. "Heresy hunting" is no part of our business. The tables, in this respect, are turned, and it is heresy which often hunts us. But when it comes rushing at us with open throat, we shall neither fly nor hide. We shall meet it manfully with all suitable weapons, whether of argument, sarcasm, or Scripture.

There will be no change in the general character of THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY from what it was last year, unless it be in the attempt to make it more popular and domestic. Though arrangements have been made for securing valuable assistance, the Editor solicits still further co-operation, (which will not be wholly unrequited,) of those numerous brethren, both among the ministry and laity, whose ready pens and fervent minds are needed to vary and enrich its successive issues. May the Divine blessing attend these efforts to maintain and spread the truth in Christ!

A. W. McCLURE.

Digitized by Google

THE SUBSCRIBERS,—believing that such a work as THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY is needed, that it has hitherto been useful, and is destined to an increasing circulation and influence,—cordially recommend it to the continued confidence and patronage of the evangelical community.

N. ADAMS,
JOHN A. ALBRO,
E. N. KIRK,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THIS Work will henceforth be issued from the Office of THE PURITAN RECORDER. The two publications, however, will be as distinct as they ever were, each pursuing independently its own appropriate objects, under separate editorial arrangements.

Communications relating to the editorial department, will be addressed to Rev. A. W. McCLURE; and those belonging to the publishing department to WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & COMPANY, 22 School street, Boston.

PROPOSALS TO MINISTERS AND OTHERS.

We invite the attention of Pastors and others to the following proposals:

1. Any pastor or other person who will send us the names of four new subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER or THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, with the pay ($2,00 each), shall receive The Puritan Recorder or The Christian Observatory for one year.

2. Any pastor or other person who will send us a less number of names than four, for either or both of the above publications, with the money for the same, shall be credited 50 cents for each name, in payment for the publication which he may select.

3. Any person who will send us more than four names, and pay for the same, may retain 50 cents per name, as his commission.

We hope that these proposals will induce many to make a special effort, who have expressed a wish for these publications, but for want of pecuniary ability have not taken them. We hope also that many ministers, who are now subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER, will secure to themselves THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY by introducing it among their people.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.

Digitized by Google

Mrs J. W. Jenkins
Rochester

Vol. 4.] FEBRUARY, 1850. [No. 2.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

A. W. McCLURE, Editor.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.
NO. 22 SCHOOL STREET.
1850.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
Morals of Suretyship,	49
Primitive Church on Military Service,	59
Correct Interpretation of the Scriptures,	69
Reviews:	
Furness on the True Nature of Worship,	76
The Influences of Childhood,	86
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Unitarianism on the Move,	91
The Mexican War,	92
Eloquence a Virtue,	93
Lyceums,	93
The Whale and his Captors,	94
Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey,	95
German Account of the Puritans,	95
Courtesy of the Independent,	96
Ecclesiastical Lists,	96

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

The Publishers find that the work cannot be afforded to clergymen, more than to others, at less than the full subscription price; and, therefore, it will be furnished to ALL subscribers at two dollars per annum. We hope that this change, which is made from necessity, and not from inclination, will meet with general approbation.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 22 School Street, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO., Publishers,
No. 22 School St., Boston.

Digitized by Google

.5.3, c., 14. 4,

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. IV. FEBRUARY, 1850. No. 2.

THE MORALS OF SURETYSHIP.

THE current maxims of business men are full of worldly wisdom. They are the matured fruit of ages of experience. The maxims of the Bible are full of *divine* wisdom. They contain not only the rules, but the results, of God's providential dealings with our race. If, by a strict process of induction from the facts which the lives of a hundred generations present, the law of God's government, which rewards the good and defeats the bad, could be accurately deduced, it would undoubtedly accord with the declarations of his revealed will. It is important, therefore, that the customs of trade, and the laws which regulate it, should not conflict with the immutable principles of justice. From the teachings of inspiration respecting the practice of assuming the legal responsibilities of other men, without a valuable consideration, either in property, in consanguinity, or in affection, we infer that it is not only unsafe and unwise, but, in many instances, positively *unjust* to do so. Every man has an undoubted right to undertake to pay another man's debts, in case the principal debtor, either through negligence, folly, or crime, should prove insolvent; provided the bondsman, by so doing, does not wrong others. While this right, thus qualified, is admitted, we still maintain that the Bible discourages the practice, and asserts the danger of adopting it, and the safety of discarding it. "He that is surety for a stranger,"

Digitized by Google

says the wise man, "shall smart for it; and he that hateth suretyship is sure."

Most of the declarations of Scripture, on this subject, are *prudential*, rather than preceptive; still they reveal as plainly the impropriety and injustice of the custom described, as would a direct prohibition of it. In one instance, the sacred penman directly forbids the practice. "Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take thy bed from under thee?" This precept is not the dictate of mere worldly wisdom, or of selfish expediency; but it is a divine admonition to regulate the dealings of upright men, and save them from ruin by the improvidence, folly, and wickedness of others. In another passage, of similar import, Solomon says: "My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth." In this case, he advises to seek deliverance from such an obligation, in preference to sleep: "Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler." These passages plainly indicate the inexpediency, if not the injustice, of suretyship.

If we carefully examine the practical operation, and the necessary results, of the custom requiring sureties for the payment of debts, and for the proper discharge of official duties, we shall find that the custom, and the law which sometimes permits it, and at others enjoins it, are unjust in their nature, immoral in their influence, and disastrous in their consequences. In the administration of human laws, it can never be just or useful to punish the innocent for the guilty; or to compel a person who has no interest in the transactions of another, to suffer for his improvidence, folly, or wickedness. If, from motives of friendship, or affection, or pecuniary reward, a man chooses to become responsible for the debts or good conduct of another, we may not question his right to do so; but, in the cases supposed, there cannot be a doubt that it would be better for the morals and prosperity of the community, if, in every instance, credit and official station were based upon the virtue and integrity of the agents employed, rather than of their sureties. It is found, in prac-

Digitized by Google

tice, that honest men do not need bail so often as knaves do; and these last do not often ask those who know them best, to become their sponsors. Dishonest men oftener importune strangers or mere acquaintances, than relatives, to become bail for them. The reason is obvious. Those who have longest known them, have the least confidence in their integrity. Hence, the man who obligates himself to pay their debts, provided they do not choose to cancel them, is usually *caught* by surprise; and, in an unguarded moment, "snared by the words of his mouth." Deceivers thus impose upon the good nature and sympathy of their neighbors.

It is difficult to see the justice of the law, which authorizes such transactions, by making such contracts possible, and enforcing the execution of them. It is often said, by way of apology for the common employment of sureties, that there would otherwise be no security for money loaned, or for the payment of debts contracted; and that great losses would ensue. The losses would be no greater in the one case than in the other; only they would fall upon a different class of persons. If the money is lost through the fraud or negligence of the debtor, why may not the creditor lose it, rather than a third person, who has no interest whatever in the matter? Usurers and rich capitalists are better able to lose the sums which they loan at an exorbitant interest, than the kind-hearted, unsophisticated men who lend their names for the benefit of others. It usually happens, that the most industrious and thrifty men in the community, those who by their integrity and fair dealing have gained the confidence of their associates in business, are oftenest importuned to assume the pecuniary responsibilities of reckless or fraudulent speculators. If honest men were always to yield to such urgent, and oftentimes pathetic, pleas for accommodation, every honest man must necessarily be ruined. The bail of such men would be taken to the extent of their ability to pay, and then would be rejected. It may be safely asserted, that there is not an upright man in the community, who possesses a competency, who has not had numerous petitions from friends, neighbors, and even strangers, to pledge that competency to foster the prodigality, or conceal the folly, of other men.

Digitized by Google

The best men are oftenest the victims of duplicity in this matter. Those whose sympathies most readily yield to the calls of misery, whether real or fictitious, are the soonest entrapped. The very object of suretyship is to protect the rich and powerful against the poverty of the indigent and the fraud of the wicked. The most worthy men in society are called upon to protect the poor from the grasp of avarice, or rescue the criminal from the consequences of his guilt. What justice is there in such requisitions? If Christian charity obliges me to become surety for an unfortunate or vicious neighbor, am I not bound to shew the same kindness to all in like circumstances? Am I, then, placed by religion at the mercy of every schemer, or every villain, who may choose to involve me in his pecuniary or penal liabilities?

We are often urged to assume risks for others, which we never would have assumed for ourselves. In the settlement of estates, it is required that the administrator and guardian give bonds for the faithful discharge of their respective duties, and for the safe keeping of the property committed to their trust. Now it seems very cruel, that widows and orphans should suffer by the negligence or mal-administration of their agents. But is it not as equitable that the owners of the property should suffer by their own agents, as that a third person, entirely uninterested, should be dragged in, by a mere legal provision, to make good their losses? The persons appointed are selected by the heirs or their friends. The Judge of Probate has the final decision of the matter, and accepts or rejects the candidates for these trusts. Men of doubtful honesty need not be chosen for such duties. If the persons interested, through mistake, or negligence, or undue partiality, install a knave in a responsible office, they alone ought to suffer the consequences.

If an improper reliance were not placed upon bondsmen, there would be greater care and caution in selecting honest men for such places. Frequently the office of guardian or administrator is sought by designing and avaricious men, for the sake of appropriating the property of the heirs to their own use. If they can gain the confidence of one or two worthy and responsible citizens, and secure their signatures

Digitized by Google

to their bond, they then devote themselves to their own interests, and often rob their wards to enrich themselves. If the law required no bond in such cases, fewer losses would be sustained. If men were chosen for such trusts purely on account of their integrity, and entered upon their duties with no other security to the heirs than their own bond, there would be far more caution in choosing the agents, and far more fidelity in executing the commissions.

The same is true in regard to lucrative offices in the gift of corporations and of governments. Heavy bonds are always required, where large amounts of property are entrusted to individuals. This is safe for the capitalists, but very unsafe for the sureties. Is it probable, however, that the liabilities of the bondsmen, who are usually mere acquaintances or political friends, will render the officer more honest and faithful in the performance of his duties? It may be so. A man may be deterred from crime, by the reflection that others will be involved in his fall. But, in a majority of cases where the incumbent is sufficiently depraved to violate his trust, the prospective sufferings of his friends will have but little influence in restraining him.

Financial agents are exposed to peculiar temptations. None but men of approved integrity should be called to such stations. It would be right and just for any man who desired a lucrative office, to receive from his friends testimonials of his character; beyond this, it may be a question whether he can reasonably ask their aid. If he calls on them to sign his bonds, he makes them partakers of his misfortunes and of the consequences of his crimes; but he gives them no right to share in his success. That there may be any justice in the transaction, the risks and the profits should be mutual; and where there are equal responsibilities, there should be a division of rewards. But where is the justice or propriety of my asking a mere acquaintance to obligate himself, *solely for my benefit*, upon certain contingencies to reduce himself and family to beggary?

If it be right to judge of any custom, by its fruits, we have the fullest testimony to the immoral tendency of suretyship. The few admitted advantages of the custom are infinitely

Digitized by Google

outweighed by the evils it produces. It leads directly to improvidence, to indolence, to insincerity, and to fraud.

It leads to *improvidence*, by fostering a spirit of adventure and speculation. There are, in this country, many restless men, full of projects and day-dreams, who are ever ready to involve themselves and others in hopeless debt, for the sake of prospective, often imaginary, gains. Indeed there are very few men who may not be tempted, in times of general excitement, to make great risks with the expectation of rich returns. The recent history of our country confirms this. During the prevalence of the Eastern land-fever, which raged a few years ago, grave divines, sagacious lawyers, honorable counsellors and magistrates, not in the heat of youth and inexperience, but in the maturity of age, improvidently embarked their all upon the troubled sea of reckless adventure; and thus their fortunes were wrecked, and their well-earned reputation for prudence irretrievably lost. The prudent man of enterprise does not thus peril his all, where the only alternative is boundless wealth or hopeless penury. But the imprudent schemer only looks at the rich prize which glitters in the distance, and heeds not the perils which surround it. There are multitudes who are ever ready to enlist in any project that promises wealth, if others will furnish the means, or the necessary security for procuring them.

The man who loans his name as surety for a debt, never expects to pay the debt. He knows that there is a possibility of his being called upon for it; still it is remote, and contingent upon many other events. If the bondsman really intends to become responsible, in the fullest sense, for the debt, why would it not be better for all parties interested that the principal and surety should change places? Or else let the surety hire the money on his own credit, and then loan it to the person whom he is anxious to oblige. Then there can be no doubt about the moral or legal responsibility in the case. The man who has actually received the money can have no plea for an abatement of the debt, because of his having allowed another person to squander the funds so procured. If the law required this in every case, very few would care to lend their names to such transactions. The

Digitized by Google

conviction of their own unlimited responsibility would deter most men from suretyship; and such accommodations would only exist where the ties of consanguinity or affection might be regarded as a sufficient consideration for the favor.

The practice of taking the written obligation of disinterested persons for the payment of loaned money, renders both parties *careless* in the management of their business. Even the wily capitalist, and the cautious millionaire will loan to persons unworthy of confidence, because others are bound for them. For the same reason, he neglects to secure the debt while the borrower has the means of paying it. He throws the whole burden of collecting the debt upon the surety, who has no other interest in the bargain than to escape, if possible, from the net into which he has fallen. The debtor often shares in the indifference of the creditor. He has gained his object. His surety is responsible for the debt, and he gives himself little anxiety about the matter. The whole intercourse of business men is thus rendered unstable and dangerous. Both the borrower and lender become improvident, careless, and sometimes dishonest; while they feel assured that a third person is gratuitously pledged for the benefit of both. The very kindness of the friend who relieves the debtor from immediate embarrassment, by becoming responsible for his debts, often renders the debtor less diligent and careful in his business. Being relieved from anxiety he becomes indolent; and with the consciousness that he has already taken one misstep, he becomes more indifferent to approaching ruin.

The relation of the debtor to his surety leads also to insincerity. The person who has carelessly, or even innocently, involved a friend in pecuniary loss, usually strives to conceal the injury as long as possible. The bankrupt always hates to examine his own books, and to become acquainted with his true condition. He is still more reluctant that his creditors should suspect his insolvency. Hence he strives to keep up the appearances of wealth, even at the expense of his own failing fortune. If his surety insists on a disclosure of his assets, and asks for the payment of debts for which he is bound, the principal at once becomes the surety's enemy,

Digitized by Google

and accuses him of a desire to hasten his ruin. Indeed, there is no more certain method of incurring the lasting displeasure of a neighbor, than by consenting to be his bondsman, and afterwards insisting on the payment of the debt.

The eagerness of such men to secure their object often leads to falsehood and fraud. It is a rare occurrence for an insolvent debtor to make an exact exhibition of his pecuniary affairs, either to his creditors or sureties. Most men who are compelled to pay the debts of others, by incautiously becoming their bondsmen, do it under the impression that they have been decoyed into the snare, overreached by the misrepresentations of the principal, oppressed by the creditors, and greatly injured and wronged by both parties. The influence of this method of securing debts is demoralizing to the surety. Most men will evade the fulfilment of such a contract, if they can. They often resort to artifices and unsound pleas, to escape from the obligation. They readily avail themselves of any defect in the notice given by the creditor, or other legal quibbles, by which they may be released from obligations voluntarily assumed. They justify this duplicity to their own consciences, by the fact that they received no consideration for the debt, and by the deceitful argument that they never expected to pay the debt.

The influence of the whole system is "evil only, and that continually." The best feelings of the human heart are appealed to by the debtor, to secure his object; and the same feelings are often grievously outraged by him, in his failure to make good his promises. Kind-hearted and benevolent men, because they fear the reputation of selfishness, hastily involve themselves, their families, and frequently *their own creditors* in bankruptcy. If the same individuals were asked to hire the money, and re-loan it to a friend, they would at once excuse themselves. To be directly responsible for the sum required would tax their sympathies too much, and they would not hesitate to refuse the favor.

There seems to be, therefore, something very seductive and fatal in the invisible bands of suretyship. The victim is decoyed to the precipice, without premonition of his danger. He is plunged into the gulf without pity, because the power

Digitized by Google

that hurled him down was created by his own act. His consent to his own ruin was obtained, perhaps, by appeals to his benevolence, and his public spirit; and, constituted or situated as he was, he was morally unable to resist.

The influence of this evil is diffusive. It spreads like a contagious disease in society. It corrupts the morals of trade, destroys the sacredness of promises, and weakens the public reverence for law. Failures and bankruptcies become so common, that they cease to bring dishonor. If the law interferes for the debtor's relief, he is apt to regard the debt as forever cancelled, and gives himself no farther trouble about it. Hence evasion, subterfuge, and trick, become the law of business; and the payment of honest debts is getting to be the exception. Men of business are like the united threads of a woven fabric, each and every one has a hold upon all. A rent in any portion of the tissue depreciates the whole. The example of one successful villain proves a stumbling-block to many aspiring youths.

If this custom were wholly abolished, property would be more secure, and men more trust-worthy. Worthless men are often installed in offices of power and profit, because by entreaty or intrigue they have secured respectable and wealthy citizens for their endorsers. The result has been, that numerous instances of default have occurred, and public and corporate funds have been squandered upon private vices. The sureties, by partizan chicanery, or legal evasions, usually escape from their liabilities; and only the public suffers. If bondsmen were not required, and integrity of character and purity of morals were made the only passports to offices of trust, few such frauds would occur. A life of gambling and speculation would be a perpetual bar to such honors.

The acknowledged honesty and competency of bankers, treasurers, and guardians, would prove a far better safeguard for the property committed to their care, than the wealth of their sureties. If a guardian be honest, he needs no sureties. If he is deficient in judgment or skill, he ought not to be chosen for the service; for no bondsman can reasonably be expected to make good his want of intellect and prudence. There is no justice, nor truth, nor honor, in thus transferring

Digitized by Google

one man's imperfections to another. The owners of the property select their own trustees; and, if they select incompetent persons, it is their own fault. A third person should no more be asked to be answerable for their mistakes in this case, than in any other.

If suretyship were entirely unknown, the prudent and industrious would be encouraged; the rash and adventurous would be restrained. The ordinary transactions of life would be more safely conducted, and there would be fewer frauds. Those who wish to live at the expense of others would be confined to a more limited sphere, and compelled to work their plots upon a more humble scale. The names of bondsmen may be as numerous as an armed host, commanding the wealth of an empire; yet even then, no man's property is safe without integrity in the signers. With all the safeguards which sagacious avarice and legal cunning can throw about wealth, there is no sure guarantee for its safety but an unblemished reputation. *A good character* is the young man's best capital, and the creditor's best security. No doubt the general happiness and contentment of society would be vastly increased, if *strict integrity* were, in all cases, the only security asked or given for money loaned or official trusts. While the morals of the community would be elevated, its pecuniary resources would be increased, for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

"For honesty hath many gains, and well the wise have known
This will prosper to the end, and fill their house with gold.
The phosphorus of cheatery will fade, and all its profits perish;
While honesty, with growing light, endureth like the moon."

"Tempered by humbleness and charity, honesty of speech hath honor;
And mingled well with prudence, honesty of purpose hath praise;
Trust payeth homage unto truth, rewarding honesty of action;
And all men love to lean on him who never failed nor fainted.
Freedom gloweth in his eyes, and nobleness of nature in his heart,
And Independence took a crown and fixed it on his head.
So he stood, in his integrity, just and firm of purpose,
Aiding many, fearing none, a spectacle to angels and to men;
Yea, — when the shattered globe shall rock in the throes of dissolution,
Still will he stand, in his integrity, sublime — *an honest man*."

Digitized by Google

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH ON MILITARY SERVICE.

THOUGH we are no believers in tradition as a rule of faith and practice, and have no reason to suppose that the Christian Fathers of the centuries next succeeding the first had a more pure faith and practice than what now obtains with us, yet it is a matter of some interest to ascertain what were their views and practice touching military service.

We are aware, that, in some minds, the idea that Christians could be soldiers in a Roman army may produce a revulsion, arising from the manner in which the rank and file of regular armies, in these days, are constituted. The recruiting service now is a great drag-net, which sweeps in especially the wrecks of humanity and morality. An army so constituted, would furnish very unfortunate company for a Christian; and any decent person would suffer degradation by coming into it. If we fancy that Roman armies were made up in a similar way, we shall with difficulty believe that Christians could enter them. But the Roman army consisted of the *elite* of the Roman people. The common soldier was a respectable citizen; respectability as a citizen, and the possession of property, were legal requisites for admission into the army. The country required soldiers, whose fortunes might be answerable for their zeal in its defence. Most of the soldiers were yeomen, who owned estates, and cultivated them with their own hands; and in that way were prepared to endure fatigues and exposure. Thus they combined capacity for hard service, with high respectability of character. This fact removes one ground of improbability, that Christians found a place in the armies. We now proceed to the proof that they did.

We have two kinds of evidence shewing what were the sentiments of the primitive Christians, as to the lawfulness of war, and military service. We have occasional expressions of the sentiments of their leading writers; not less satisfactory for having been incidentally given. And then we have the indubitable evidence of multiplied facts, going to shew, that Christians, as a general thing, hesitated not to serve in the wars of the Roman empire.

Digitized by Google

Under the head of incidental expressions of opinion, we will first quote Tertullian; who as a writer, was not less able and distinguished, than any of the Latin Fathers. He wrote about a hundred years after the apostles. In his Apology, chapter xxviii., he says: "It is true, we are but of yesterday, yet we have filled all your towns, cities, islands, camps, courts, palaces, senate and forum. We leave you only your temples. For what war should we not be ready and well prepared?" Here is at once a declaration of a fact, and an indication of an opinion; — of the fact, that in Tertullian's day, less than one hundred years after the last of the apostles was dead, the Roman camps were filled with Christians. . The writer indicates the innocence of the practice, by the challenging tone, with which he speaks of it. But Tertullian's mind was more clearly indicated in another book, written by him, the very title of which assumes all that we are endeavoring to prove. The title is, "De Corona Militis," — Of the soldier's crown. The occasion of the book was this. A Christian soldier had had awarded to him a crown of laurels, as a token of distinguished honor from the Emperor. He had refused to wear it by reason of scruples of conscience, while other Christian soldiers, in like case, had no such scruples. His refusal, of course, was condemned by the other Christian soldiers, and became the occasion of increasing the vexations and persecutions of Christians, and, consequently, of much discussion among them. Tertullian wrote this book, to defend the act of that soldier. But such a question of casuistry could hardly have been discussed by Tertullian, if he and his generation had believed in the unlawfulness of all military service. Then in his Apology, chapter xliii., he expressly says to his heathen opponents: "We also pursue with you the business of navigation, *of war*, of agriculture, of commerce; we share in your employments, and contribute of our labor, to your profit, for the public service." Another passage from Tertullian's Apology shews, that Christians were wont to pray for the success of the Roman armies. He says: "We pray for the safety of the emperors, to the eternal and living God, whom emperors themselves should desire to be propitious to them,

Digitized by Google

above all others that are called gods. We, looking up to heaven with hands outstretched because they are innocent, with heads uncovered because we are not ashamed, without a prompter because from the heart, constantly pray for all emperors, that they may have a long life, a secure empire, a safe palace, *strong armies*, a faithful senate, a moral people, and a quiet world." These incidental admissions are the more noticeable, because the ascetic temper of Tertullian disposed him to be a violent opposer of war in every form.

The Apostolical Constitutions, a work dating back to the third century, book VIII., chapter 32, where the work treats of those, who are to be received to baptism, uses these words: "If a soldier come, let him be taught to do no injustice, to accuse no man falsely, and to be content with his stipend. If he comply, let him be admitted."

Cyprian, Book 4, De Laurentio et Ignatio, says: "They formerly serving in secular camps, yet true and spiritual soldiers of God, achieved palms and illustrious crowns, through the sufferings of our Lord; while by a confession of Christ, they prostrated the devil."

Such is the general testimony of the early Christian writers, as to the fact of military service. We have found no instance, which conflicts with these, unless it be that of Origen; if, indeed, his is really an exception. Celsus had written a book against Christianity, and had brought against Christians many false and foul aspersions, charging them, among other things, with refusing to fight for the emperor, and for their country. Origen does not directly deny the charge; but chooses rather to say, that Christians did more for the defence of their country, through their piety and prayers, than others did by their weapons. His words are these: "We, the rather, fight for the emperor. And though we might not make a campaign with him, even if he should urge it, yet we would do it for him by rearing the peculiar entrenchment of piety, through prayers to God." Whether Origen in this meant to say, that no Christians, under any circumstances, would bear arms; or whether, for some special reason, he chose to evade a more full declaration of the sentiments and practice of Christians on the subject; or whether he meant to say, that for some

Digitized by Google

reasons *then existing*, Christians could more properly fight with prayers, than weapons of war, the reader must judge for himself. It is well known, that Origen held some views contrary to the received opinions of the church; and yet it is not so clear, that he was a non-resistant. For, in another place, discoursing upon the commonwealth of bees, he says: "Perhaps also the wars of bees teach us to maintain just wars, if occasion demand it." And, possibly, the passage above quoted from his work against Celsus may be interpreted by other passages from the same work; as toward the end of the eighth chapter, where he speaks of Christians as a priesthood, whose duty it is "to fight, not with weapons, but by prayer to God, for those who are engaged in a just war and for the lawful emperor, that all opposition to those who do right may be put down."

We come now, in the second place, to notice some facts in history, going to shew, that it was a common thing for Christians to serve in wars. The first that we shall allege, is that famous one, of the so-called "Thundering Legion;" which bears date as early as A. D. 174; only about seventy years after the last of the apostles. The story in brief is this. While the Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, was engaged in war with the Marcomanni, he found, on one occasion, his army hemmed in by the enemy; and, under an intense heat, ready to perish with thirst. All endeavors to extricate himself proved fruitless; and in despair he was awaiting the result. At this juncture, the Prefect of the Pretorians told him that there was in the army, a legion of Christians; and that it was said, that there was nothing which they could not obtain by their prayers. Upon this, the emperor sent a request, that they would pray for deliverance. They complied, and gave themselves to prayer. Suddenly there came up a storm of thunder and hail, having the appearance of sheets of fire falling from the heavens, which put their enemies to flight, destroying a great part of them; and which brought relief to the thirst of the Roman army.

This is the story as told by Tertullian and many other Christian writers. Those writers no doubt believed, that there was a real miracle in the case. Even Gibbon thinks

Digitized by Google

it natural enough, that Christians in the army should ascribe some merit to the fervent prayers, offered up, in a moment of danger, for the public safety. But it is not our purpose, to settle any questions of this nature. All historians, however sceptical, allow the substantial facts in the case. The distress of the army, the seasonable tempest of rain, hail, and thunder, and the dismay and defeat of the barbarians, are celebrated by several pagan writers. The only question, with which we have to do is this, — Were there Christians in that army? Or were there so many, that even one whole legion consisted entirely of them? Is it credible that Tertullian, living in the same age, should, in recording the events of that war, have introduced the assertion, that there was such a Christian legion, and those so eminently men of prayer, if in the general belief of the Christian world, it were counted a sin to serve in the armies; and if by that public sentiment Christians were actually excluded from the armies? The veracity of Tertullian is not doubted. That he could not have known whether Christians served in armies, is impossible. And if he had asserted a thing, so contrary to the convictions and habits of the Christian world, his narrative of the event would not have been adopted, as it was by the leading ecclesiastical writers, following nearest to his times. The fact, that Christians, even at that early date, were somewhat numerous in the armies, is the least that can be gathered from this history.

The next fact which we present, is one of still earlier date; that is A. D. 108, not far from the death of the apostle John. It is, that Trajan, in his renowned expedition into the east, in which he sought to rival the conquests of Alexander, found in his army ten thousand Christians; who, when he required the sacrifices to be performed for the army, refused to submit to the heathen rites. And these he separated from the army, and sent in disgrace into Armenia, to induce them to abandon their religion.* This is a very important fact, shewing, that, even in the age of the apostles, Christians were wont freely to enter the armies.

* Vide Baronius Annal. ad An. 108.

Digitized by Google

The celebrated "Theban Legion" shall furnish our next instance. This fact is discredited by Gibbon; though without a statement of any sufficient reasons. It is reported on the authority of Eucherius, bishop of Lyons, who published it about the year 450; that is, one hundred and fifty years after the date of the event. The fact reported is, that this legion consisted of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six soldiers, all Christians; and that, when Diocletian commenced his war of extermination upon Christianity, this legion was involved in the slaughter which ensued. It is related, that Maximilian, after having offered to all the legion the alternative of sacrificing to the heathen gods, or being slain, and having got a refusal from them all, first ordered the legion to be decimated; and every tenth man was slain, as a terror to the rest. When he bade the survivors to sacrifice, they replied: "We are your soldiers, O Cæsar, and have taken up arms for the defence of the Roman Empire. Nor have we ever been deserters or traitors, nor have we merited punishment for cowardice. Your commands we have also obeyed; except that instructed by Christian laws, we have refused to worship devils, and shunned altars polluted with blood." This butchery of six thousand men is no more incredible, than many other scenes which even Gibbon relates of this persecution; while yet he takes the place of apologist for the ferocious Emperor who ordered it.

It is related by Witsius, we know not what early author he followed, that forty-six Christian soldiers were beheaded at Rome, under Flavius Claudius, who succeeded Gallienus, about the year 269; and that, under Aurelian, about six years later, sixty-five soldiers, accused of Christianity were commanded to be led without the Salarian gate; and that forty other soldiers underwent martyrdom. This writer says: "It is certain, that Maximilian, when he found his army filled with Christian soldiers, formed and executed the horrid purpose of exterminating them by slaughtering men without number, expecting thereby to propitiate his patron deity Hercules, after whom he had taken one of his names." *

* See Witsius, Diatribe de Legione Fulminatrice.

Digitized by Google

Gregory Nyssen, following Basil the great, celebrates the praises of forty soldiers, who obtained the crown of martyrdom in Armenia. In his second oration, he gives an account of a veteran band, whose prayers obtained a deliverance almost exactly like that related of the Thundering Legion.

Our next instance was the decisive battle of Theodosius, against Arbogastes and Eugenius. Arbogastes, first a soldier of the nation of the Franks, had, in a career of successful ambition, gained such influence in the Western Empire, as to have assassinated the Emperor Valentinian, and mounted his throne. He then sent ambassadors to Theodosius, with the request, that he would acknowledge as his lawful colleague, the citizen, who had obtained the suffrage of the armies and provinces of the West. Theodosius, though indignant at such perfidy, dissembled his deep resentments; while he spent two years in preparations to chastise the assassin, and avenge the death of the brother of his wife. At length, he met his foe on the borders of Italy. Arbogastes had collected a vast army of Gauls and Germans, for which the army of Theodosius was hardly a match. The battle raged one day without decision; but with the advantage on the side of Arbogastes. Yet on the second day, a violent tempest arose from the East, blowing in the face of Arbogastes' army, giving greater speed to the javelins and other missiles of Theodosius' army, and driving back into their own faces, the missiles of the enemy. The battle was decisive; and the most trustworthy writers of those ages, speak of the victory as procured by prayer.

Another instance, in which Christian zeal was conspicuously blended with the strifes and fortunes of war, was in the famous siege of Nisibis. This was a large and strongly fortified city, about two days journey from the river Tigris; forming the main eastern defence of the Roman empire; and was esteemed the bulwark of the East. Sapor, king of the Persians, had long desired to reduce it. Twice had he been repulsed, with loss and ignominy; and now he had come the third time, at the head of the united forces of Persia and India. The religious zeal of the Christian citizens coöperated with the Roman army; and James, their bishop,

Digitized by Google

for the part which he took in the defence, was called the preserver of the city. The Persians, having tried in vain for seventy days, the usual means of battering down the walls, at the stated season of the melting of the snows of the mountains, when the streams were swollen, had stopped the course of the river Mygdonius, and turned the force of the waters against the wall, expecting thus to force an entrance. In the course of one day, Sapor had effected two openings in the walls; and the next morning he brought up all his forces, in the full expectation of victory. But he found the wall repaired in both places. "For," says Theodoret, "that divine man, when, by the force of his prayers, he had confirmed the minds of the soldiers, and the rest of the citizens, effected the rebuilding of the wall; replacing upon them the machines for discharging missiles upon the enemy. And this he performed, not by going near the wall himself, but by praying in the church to the God and Lord of the universe. Moreover, Sapor was not only astonished by the rapidity of the work, but another sight terrified him. For he saw standing upon the wall, a person in imperial robes, and beheld the splendor of his purple, and his crown shining afar. He at first conjectured, that this person was the Roman Emperor; and he threatened death to those who told him that the Emperor was not present. But they insisted that the Emperor was still at Antioch. And then Sapor understood that the vision signified, that God was fighting for the Romans." Such, with other legendary matter, is Theodoret's recital of the defeat of the Persians in that crisis. How much of fiction and embellishment mingle with it, may not be very easy to decide. Nor is it necessary to our purpose. For it is undeniable, and even a Gibbon does not deny that, in this battle, Christian zeal coöperated with Roman arms; which it could not have done, if Christians were non-resistants.

Further, if the primitive Christians did not serve in wars, it is unaccountable, that history conveys no record of the deep and wide-spread irritations, and multiplied martyrdoms, which must have been occasioned by such refusal of military service. History clearly informs us what the laws and usages of the Romans were, as to supplying recruits for their

Digitized by Google

armies. Levies of troops were made annually from the yeomanry, the bone and sinew of the people. The mode of enlisting recruits now common, which secures a class of persons, that would naturally have few Christians among them, was all unsuited to the Roman notions of the military employment. Even a poor man, of however good character, could not be a soldier. When a levy of troops was to be made, notice was given for the assembling of all citizens, capable of bearing arms, and belonging to the class from which the soldiers were taken. When they were assembled, a particular division or tribe was drawn out by lot; and then, from this tribe, the military tribunes selected such as they would. The persons selected, willing or unwilling, were joined to the army. In general, this was not a measure of severity; because such notions of honor were attached to the soldier's employment, as to make it attractive to the Roman people. A place in the army was the road to promotion and influence; so much so, that, in later times, the emperors were created by the armies.

But if it were regarded in the church as an unchristian act, to take the soldier's oath, and enter the army, that fact, no doubt, would have been seized upon by heathen tribunes, or recruiting officers, as a convenient occasion of vexing the church. Christians would be at least as likely as any to be found among the conscripts; especially if it were known, that their conscience repelled the service. And here would have been a perpetual and extended conflict, between the church and the powers that were. It is incredible, that such a conflict could have existed, and the report of it perished; for martyrology was the most chosen theme for Christian writers of those and succeeding ages. If martyrs had been so multiplied upon such occasions, it is wonderful that the testimony was never recorded; or if recorded, that it never had conveyance to us. Gibbon records one instance, occurring in the fourth century, of an African youth, who was put to death for his refusal to bear arms. We know not of another. Whether this person was a Christian, or whether he was attached to some of the pernicious heresies, which in that day had arisen, and adopted non-resistance principles, is

Digitized by Google

not apparent. This last suggestion leads us to notice that, while the evidence is so full, that orthodox Christians did not refuse military service, some of the several heresies which came up, embraced the non-resistant element. The Manichees, a most execrable sect, embodying the worst features of infidelity and immorality, went so far in the non-resistant theory, as to condemn the magistracy, as proceeding from their evil god, or principle of evil. And they pronounced war unlawful; and condemned Moses for engaging in it. The Donatists also, one of the worst of the sects of the times, were non-resistants; and that to such extremes, that they would not only suffer violence unresisting, but, on some occasions, would compel men by violence to commit violence upon them! See Osiander's account of them, in his ecclesiastical history. Thus the non-resistant principle, in primitive times, kept the same sort of company, that it now does, having little countenance from orthodox Christians.

While the wars of Christendom have generally been repugnant to the precepts and spirit of the gospel, it does seem that strictly defensive wars for the repelling of invasion, — the employment of the military resources of the magistracy for the suppression of riot, anarchy, and rebellion, — and the "right of revolution," in extreme cases, by force of arms, are not condemned by religion. To proclaim the doctrine of absolute non-resistance, would be to invite the strong and unprincipled, who may refuse to come into the arrangement for settling public disputes, to make the weak and the conscientious their prey. It would be telling the despots of earth, that their cruellest oppressions shall be endured as long and as quietly as they could wish. Christianity does, indeed, aim at the abolition of war; and it will eventually succeed in this holy aim. But this it will effect by taking away the causes and provocatives of war; and by diffusing the reign of grace and truth, till the "golden rule" shall become the law of nations, and the practical policy of states. Then, and not till then, will warfare disappear from the face of the earth. It ought not to disappear, so long as physical force is arrayed on the side of robbery and tyranny. There will never be universal peace, till universal right is done!

Digitized by Google

CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

"THE creed of the Christian," says Isaac Taylor, "is the fruit of *exposition*. To ascertain the true meaning of the words and phrases used by those who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, is the single aim of the studies of the theologian. *Interpretation* is his sole function." These axioms, if limited to revealed or Christian theology, are obviously true; and they present the science of interpretation, particularly in its application to the sacred writings, as one of paramount importance. That this science is liable to abuse, and has, in many instances, been grossly abused, is certain. Still, this furnishes no argument against its existence as a science; or against its importance, when honestly and legitimately applied. All Protestants profess to receive the Bible, as capable of being understood, and as their sole and sufficient rule of faith and duty. Hence, all Protestants are interested to understand the Bible; by applying correct principles of interpretation, as they would to any other book; and thus ascertaining what is really the mind of the Spirit.

We design not here to go into a statement of the established principles of interpretation. This is not necessary. A moment's reflection will satisfy every one, that there are such principles, and that, whether conscious of it or not, men continually apply them, and abide by the application.

Your neighbor comes to you with some interesting news. You understand him; you reply, and he understands you. But how is this, unless you and he have common principles of interpreting language, which both, perhaps unconsciously, apply; and by the application of which you both abide?

Again; your neighbor, for a satisfactory consideration, gives you a deed of a valuable piece of land. You understand it perfectly, and so does he; and both are satisfied. But this is only because you both interpret the instrument according to common and established principles. Should your neighbor depart from these principles, and insist that the deed to you and your heirs forever meant only a lease for a limited period, contention and confusion would ensue.

Digitized by Google

Take another instance: A number of you agree to form a society, for the promotion of some favorite object. You adopt a constitution, the stipulations of which you all understand, and by which all consent to be governed. Here, again, you have applied common principles of interpretation, and expect to abide by the application. But suppose, on experiment, that one of the members understands the most important article in the constitution in a manner very different from the rest of you. He willingly assents to the article; but he insists that he has a right to put his own meaning upon the terms, and his meaning is just the opposite of yours. Here, again, you have no common principles of interpretation, and the result, as before, is strife and disturbance.

These familiar illustrations are designed to shew, that *there are established principles of interpreting language*, which are sufficiently understood; and which, in common life, are continually applied. Without them, we could not converse with our families, or correspond with absent friends, or transact the most necessary affairs of life. Without them, society could not be formed; or if formed, the frame of it could not be held together. Indeed, without them, we might as well have no language; for it would be impossible to hold mutual intercourse through such a medium.

We proceed to shew, in the next place, that from these established principles of interpretation, which all men apply in common life, and which constitute the very basis of social intercourse, numbers strangely depart, while interpreting the language of the Bible.

Some do this, in accommodation to their *wishes*. They wish to polish and improve what appear to them the rough features of the Bible. They wish to round off its sharp points, to soften down the rigor of its requisitions and the harshness of its threatenings, to remove in a measure its severe restraints. They wish it to speak a different meaning from that which appears on the open face of it; and they flatter themselves, at length, that it does speak a different meaning. "The wish is father to the thought."

Some interpreters depart from established principles, in accommodation to their *delinquencies*. If the Bible really

Digitized by Google

means what it seems to mean, they fall miserably short of it, and have reason to feel themselves reproved and alarmed. But such feelings are not comfortable, and must be dispelled. And now what is to be done? To bring their characters up to the strict and holy claims of the Bible, they are not willing; and hence a desperate effort must be made to bring the Bible down to their defective practice. And after much learned labor, perhaps, they think themselves successful.

Persons sometimes depart from established principles when interpreting the Bible, in accommodation to their *systems*. Their system of religion is already established. It is, in their view, complete and perfect. They go to the Bible, not so much to ascertain what it really means, as to bring it to an accordance with their preconceived views. The Bible must be made at any rate to conform to their systems, and not their systems to conform to the Bible.

Others depart from established principles in the interpretation of the Bible, from a disposition to lean to their *own understandings*. They think themselves capable of determining, not only what the Bible means, but what it ought to mean. And if it does not seem to mean what, in their judgment, it ought to mean, then it must be made to conform to their judgment. It must be narrowed or widened, prolonged or curtailed, till it comes to speak a language which seems to them reasonable.

In the respects here referred to, persons do not treat any other book or writing, as they treat the Bible. If they did, they might wrest it as easily as the Bible; and they would have no more reason to object to it, than they profess to have to object to the Bible. For example; the Bible ascribes to our Lord Jesus Christ the names, the attributes, the works, and the worship, of the Supreme Being. He is repeatedly called God and Jehovah. He is said to know all things, to have made all things, to uphold all things, and to be an object of worship to saints on earth, and to saints and angels in heaven. But some apply principles of interpretation to the Bible, by which they satisfy themselves that this does not prove, or mean, that Christ is a divine person,— that it is all very consistent with his being no more than a mortal

Digitized by Google

man. Now, let these persons take the same principles of interpretation which they apply to the Bible, and by which they bring out this result, and apply them to the Athanasian Creed, or to the Assembly's Catechism, and they might just as well prove that neither of these formularies teaches the proper divinity of Christ.

Take another instance. The Bible teaches the endless punishment of the wicked; — that "they shall go away into everlasting punishment;" that they shall "depart accursed into everlasting fire," where "the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," and where "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." But some apply principles of interpretation to the Bible, by which they satisfy themselves that this language does not mean that the wicked shall be punished forever, or that they shall be punished at all in the future world. Everlasting signifies a limited duration; the worm, the fire, the punishment, are the afflictions of this life; and hell means only the valley of Hinnom, — a polluted valley near Jerusalem. But those principles of interpretation which, when applied to the Bible, make it teach universal salvation, if applied to any other work in favor of future punishment, would cause it to teach the same doctrine. Take, for instance, President Edwards' sermon on "The Eternity of Hell Torments." The same exegesis, which would make the Bible a Universalist book, would make this a Universalist sermon. "The eternity of hell torments." What does this mean? Why, eternity means a limited duration; and hell torments refer to certain pains which were once endured in the valley of Hinnom. There is nothing, therefore, in the title of this sermon, or in the sermon itself, interpreted after this manner, which need offend the ear of the most sensitive Universalist.

These remarks are made, not to treat lightly a serious and awful subject, but to expose the miserably trifling manner in which many persons allow themselves to use the Bible; and to shew how differently they interpret the Bible from any other book. Let any other volume be tortured, as the Bible is, to bring it into conformity to the interests, the inclinations, and the prejudices of men, and it may be tortured just

Digitized by Google

as easily as the Bible. Let the language of common life be submitted to the same ordeal, and it would cease to be intelligible, and social intercourse through such a medium would be no longer possible.

The way is now prepared to urge, in the third place, the importance of adhering to the same principles of interpretation in regard to the Bible, which are applied to ordinary language, and to other books. The Bible was written for the benefit, not of the learned and critical only, but of the plain and common reader. It was made, therefore, a plain book; and was designed to be interpreted in a plain, common-sense way, according to the ordinary use of terms. Such being the case, unless the Bible is interpreted in this way, it is virtually *altered*. There are two ways in which the Bible may be altered: The one is, by literally adding to it, or taking from it; the other, by suffering its contents to remain, and misinterpreting them. And there are many persons, who would not dare attempt the former, who readily perpetrate the latter. Here is a passage which, in its plain meaning, teaches a particular doctrine. If now, instead of receiving this doctrine, I misinterpret the passage, and put quite another construction upon it, what do I better than though I had first blotted out the passage, and then written down another, according to my own views? The mere letters and words of a passage of Scripture are of no importance, separate from the meaning. If then, by false interpretation, the meaning is altered, the Bible is altered, although the letters and words may remain the same as before.

Give the enemies of the Bible all the latitude of interpretation which they desire, and not the most virulent among them ever need be an avowed infidel. Not one among them ever would take the name of infidel, so long as it might be for his credit and interest to avoid it. The work of interpreting the holy Scriptures is one of high responsibility; while the sin of misinterpreting, and thus altering them, is one of the darkest dye.

The importance of fairly interpreting the Bible will further appear, if we consider that this is the only way, in which Christians can ever be brought to anything like

Digitized by Google

uniformity of religious sentiment. Why is it that persons do not differ as widely respecting the doctrines of Pelagius, or Augustine, or Calvin, or Socinus, as respecting the doctrines of the Bible? Not because these authors wrote more plainly and explicitly than the inspired penmen. This is not the reason. But human authors are not regarded as of binding authority. Hence, if persons do not like them, they forfeit nothing by rejecting them. They have no temptations, therefore, to misinterpret them. And the consequence is, that readers in general, whether they approve of them or not, interpret and understand them alike.* Now let persons go to the Bible in the same way, with no end in view but simply to understand it; let them apply to it the same general principles of interpretation as they would to any other book; and in nearly every case, they would come to the same conclusions as to its import. They might differ in regard to some small matters, which distance of time and place had rendered obscure; but in all essential points, the generality of Christians would be agreed, and uniformity of sentiment would be restored.

This, it is believed, is the only way in which it ever can be restored. While persons go to the Bible, encumbered with their prejudices, and determined to make it speak according to their particular views, it is quite impossible that they should understand it, or be agreed respecting it.

When the Holy Bible is treated in this way, there is no difficulty in seeing why they do not understand it alike. How should they understand it alike, unless they all agreed

* That we have here assigned the true reason for the differences of opinion which are entertained respecting the import of the Bible, is evident from the following facts.

1. Those persons who have cast off the Bible, so as no longer to consider it of binding authority, have usually understood it *much alike*. They say, in general, with Professor Gabler: "An impartial view of Christian theology, as contained in the New Testament, must, in its nature, be *pretty much orthodox*." Or with Lord Bolingbroke: "The doctrines of grace are *certainly the doctrines of the Bible*, and if I believe the Bible, I must believe them."

2. Other writings, when they come to be held as of binding authority, are as variously interpreted as the Bible. Witness the articles of the Church of England, respecting which the members of that church are quite as far from being agreed, as they are respecting the Book of God.

Digitized by Google

to misinterpret it, and to do it after the same manner? The Bible is as plain in its annunciations as any religious book; and if all who read it would go to it with simplicity of purpose, to ascertain its meaning, and would apply to it the ordinary principles of interpretation, as they do to other books, they could not essentially misunderstand it, and would soon be agreed respecting it.

It may be observed, again, that this is the only *safe* mode of treating the Bible. The Bible is a revelation from God, and however it may be regarded by us, *it will stand.* "The unbelief of men cannot make the word of God of none effect;" and no more can their false interpretations have any such result. We may think that we have set aside a passage of Scripture, in accommodation to our views and wishes; but we deceive ourselves in this respect. The passage stands just as before, and we must abide its true import, whether we will or no. It is, then, as much our safety, as it is our duty, to be honest; take the Bible as it is; receive it in its plain meaning, however severely it may censure us; and make it our study, not to conform the Bible to our wishes, but to conform our wishes, hearts, and characters to the holy precepts of the Word of God.

Unless we will receive and treat the Bible in this way, it may be far better for us that we had no Bible. For what good can the Bible do us, if we only trifle with it? What good can the Bible do us, if, instead of making it the standard, and conforming our opinions and characters to it, we set up something else as the standard, and go to the Bible only that we may bend it to our wishes? The Bible is falsified, if it is falsely interpreted. No, if we need any Bible, we need the true Bible. We need it just as God made it, and meant it; and we need to interpret it in a plain, honest, common-sense way, as we would any other book or writing, of which we were sincerely desirous to ascertain the sense.

Thus regarding and treating the Word of God, — studying it in the temper of a little child, we shall be led into all necessary truth; and may be guided up, at length, to that bright world, whence came this most holy Word, and towards which all its influences tend.

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

A Sermon on the True Nature of Worship. Preached on Sunday morning, Feb. 11, 1849, at the Church of the Messiah, New York; by Rev. Wm. H. Furness, of Philadelphia. Phonographically reported for the N. Y. Tribune, and published Feb. 24.

Worship is the first duty of the creature to the Creator. A belief in the existence of a Supreme Being to whom we are indebted for our own existence, and for the blessings with which life has been crowned, naturally suggests the obligation of homage. It becomes, therefore, an important practical inquiry, In what consists the true nature of religious worship? It is undeniable, that teachings are given at the present day, in the name of Christianity, and by those who profess to be its friends, which, in their obvious tendency, are utterly subversive of the common faith of Christians in relation to divine worship. With the professed intention of correcting what they conceive to be erroneously held on the subject, and for the purpose, as they would have us believe, of rendering the worship of God more spiritual in its practice, language is employed by certain writers, which, taken in its obvious import, would leave the impression, that no particular *acts* or *forms* were required; and that men can worship God as well while engaged in their secular pursuits, or while enjoying the festivities of a social occasion, as in the services of the sanctuary on the Sabbath. There is no necessity, therefore, that men should *stop* to worship their Creator. Let them keep about their regular employments, and they will be just as likely to render him acceptable homage, as if, ceasing from them, they were to go up to his courts, and there engage in those religious rites which custom has established. That this is the effect of much that goes under the name of religious instruction in relation to worship at the present day, may be seen from many a modern production. As an instance of it, we would refer to the sermon whose title stands at the head of the present article. It is from a gentleman of high standing in the denomination to which he belongs; and though that denomination has not given its

Digitized by Google

special sanction to this particular sermon, others like it have proceeded from individuals in the same body, which have either received their approbation, or in reference to which no dissent has been expressed.

We propose, therefore, to give the sermon referred to, a slight examination, and to make its sentiments the subject of a few remarks. That no injustice may be done the author, a sufficient number of extracts from the sermon will here be introduced, to exhibit the drift of the discourse, so that no mistake may be made in regard to its true intention. Among many similar expressions the following passages may be cited, as fair specimens of the whole tenor of the performance.

"By styling these forms which we here observe, divine services, we give it to be supposed that the divinity can be served no where but here; or at least no where so truly and so acceptably. Accordingly, the great mass of men associate all their ideas of sanctity and religion with this day and place. But what now is the real service of God? It is *living* service. It is such service as the spirit, the life that is in man, prompts him to render. Thus does all nature serve him; not with stated and formal ceremonies, not with loud and hollow acclamations of praise; but by its ceaseless, beneficent, harmonious operations." — "God does not require the stars to pause in their orbits, and raise to him a shout of praise, for they truly serve him by moving on steadily and silently in their courses." — "The earth worships God by being arrayed in her robes of beauty, laden with her fruits, and wreathed with her flowers; the bird, also, in building her nest, and nurturing her young." — "Whatever is innocent, be it ever so joyous, is a part of the divine service — the service that is rendered in spirit and in truth. The child when it leaps and laughs in the exuberance of its harmless mirth, is worshipping God in a spirit and a truth, in comparison with which the gorgeous ceremonies of old cathedrals may be falsehood and death." — "I tell you, my friends, we are worshipping and serving God in spirit and in truth, oftentimes, I had almost said always, when we least think of serving him. Oftentimes we are nearest to God when we think ourselves fartherest from the church." — "I would teach distinctly, and emphatically, that the true worship in spirit and in truth, is the active service of the spirit, the life, the execution in lawful ways of the force that is in us. The services of the church and the Sabbath, no matter with what solemn and imposing circumstances invested, are, even when sincerely observed, no better than the daily offices of life. Prayers, when true, are only equivalent to acts of charity, the very least and lowest part of the worship of God." — "I wonder whether we shall ever attain to the simplicity of the religion of Jesus. Although he did not condemn the formal service of the synagogue,

Digitized by Google

yet he no where utters a single word enjoining the observance of the Sabbath, or attendance on public worship." — "But as if we were resolved to make our inconsistency as glaring as possible, and shew how dead our so called divine services are, we will have our holy days and places, and cry, Lord, Lord, all the more vociferously, for our neglect of every plain office of duty and humanity." — "Some men make a great talk about religion, and the service of God, while he oftentimes is the truly religious man, the true worshipper of the Father, who hardly knows that he has any religion, or who, at least, as a wise man once said, has none — to speak of." — "The worship of the Father, as Christ has described it verbally and practically — it is as simple as the blowing of the wind, the opening of the light, the singing of the birds, the falling of the rain." — "Go then from this house, my friends, not as if you were quitting, but as if you were entering, the divine presence. Let the whole of life be your sanctuary of worship. The faithful exertion of whatever power you possess — that is the true spiritual service of God, which he will receive."

These quotations are fair specimens of the kind of instruction which is given on this subject by some who profess to be religious teachers. We submit it, Whether the effect of such instruction is not what we have intimated,— destructive of all that is essential in religious worship? If these were only figures of speech, employed to illustrate and enforce the duty in question, they would be less objectionable, and might be easily pardoned; — though, even in that case, we can see no good excuse for employing metaphors in such a way as entirely to mislead the understanding on so important a subject. These, however, are something more than simple metaphors. The writer here quoted, is not seeking to set forth the worship of God under figures, or if he is, he has a strange way of doing it. He tells us, the earth, the elements, the heavenly bodies, the birds, and the child, do all literally worship the Creator. Now what resemblance is there between the service which God requires of intelligent beings and that which unconscious nature renders to him; or that which is expressed by the joyous bound of an innocent child? These acts are not worship, nor anything that bears the least resemblance to worship. It would be just as proper to speak of a stone as worshipping God, as the things which this writer has here named. Such representations may be specimens of fine writing, but they are miserable theology; there may be poetry in them, but there is no religion; they may

Digitized by Google

delight the fancy, but they certainly mislead the judgment, and that too on a vitally important subject. Let a man imbibe the notions here inculcated, and he will feel no longer the need of a Sabbath, or of a sanctuary, or of any of those forms which custom has established. Why have a Sabbath, when you can worship God as well, or better, any other day? Why have a temple consecrated to divine service, when all nature is a temple for this purpose? Why cease your labor to assemble in the house of God, when you can worship him better in the field, or in the street, or behind the counter? This making worship of every thing we do, is virtually to have no worship,— it is doing it away entirely. If God may be worshipped anywhere, and perhaps better, in the counting-room, or in the shop, than in a house consecrated to him, then he will not be worshipped at all as he ought to be. These views have the same effect to weaken the obligations of worship in the minds of men, as the doctrine of pantheism has to eradicate all impressions of a personal Deity. He who teaches that every thing is God, just as effectually excludes the Deity from the mind, as he who declares there is no God. So, if all we do sincerely is religious worship, then we have properly no worship; and you might as well say so at once.

But worship, to be acceptable, must be *intelligent*. It must give expression to the religious affections of the heart. Love, gratitude, and reverence for the Deity, are awakened in the soul, and in worship we give utterance to these feelings in suitable language. This implies, that we have some correct knowledge of the Supreme Being. It pre-supposes that the attributes of his character have been made the subjects of thought and meditation. How otherwise can emotions of gratitude and reverence be excited? The heart is to be reached through the understanding. So that not only must we have in the mind a knowledge of the divine perfections, but these must be the objects of thought at the time we are attempting to render homage; for it is only while we muse upon the divine character, that the fire of devotion burns.

But what knowledge of God can unconscious nature have? What can the hills, and the trees, and the brooks know of

Digitized by Google

him? How much knowledge of God have the elements? Do the sun, moon, and stars, as they move silently on, perceive the perfections of the Being who made them? A child, it is true, is a conscious being; but very few children have any adequate conceptions of the Deity. They know but little of him, and think still less. Especially is this the case when, in the buoyancy and exuberance of their feelings, they bound before you in their childish mirth. Unquestionably a child might be, and ought to be, taught some proper knowledge of the Creator, and might be instructed to render him some degree of reverence and homage. But who would think of regarding their thoughtless, though it may be innocent, sport as worship? With even less propriety might this name be applied to the revolution of the stars, and the operations of nature. Such language is little less than absurd. What is it but downright folly, to speak of inanimate nature as rendering worship to God?

In the figurative language of Scripture, his works are sometimes said to praise him. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." In another place of the Psalmist, "fire and hail; snow and vapor; stormy wind, fulfilling his word; mountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and cedars; beasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and flying fowl," are all invoked to praise Jehovah. But who is ever misled by this language? Who understands these expressions in any other sense than as the high-wrought metaphors of poetry? The mind of the writer, moved and elevated by the strength of his devotional feelings, gives utterance to them in expressions like these. But no one is misled by them; no one thinks of taking them literally. If they are ever used in any other form than as impassioned figures of speech, in which the writers seek to give vent to the strong feelings of their own hearts, they are intended merely to declare the truth, that God's works are the expressions of his power, wisdom, and goodness; that these, and other attributes of his character, as Paul says, "are clearly seen in the things *that do appear*," in the visible creation. This, however, is a very different thing from affirming, as these writers do, that inanimate objects worship their Creator; and referring us to them

Digitized by Google

for the kind of service that we must render. For this, there is no warrant in Scripture, and the recommendation appears absurd. *Our* service must be intelligent.

It should also be *voluntary.* By this is meant, that it must be the dictate of our own wills. There must be a solemn and deliberate purpose of the mind to render it. It is in regard to worship as it is in reference to every other act of man, the exercise of the will it is, and that alone, which gives it moral character. If there is not this exercise of the will in the offering of homage; in other words, if it is not rendered by the purpose and determination of the mind, the act has no moral character; it is neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy.

Now if a little child, as it sports about the room, has a purpose in its mind by these acts to render service to God; if these are the motives by which the acts are prompted, and if God has prescribed to children that they shall worship him in this way, then may their sports and glee be appropriately called worship; and not otherwise. But no one will be foolish enough to suppose that a child has any purpose of this kind in its play, or that God has ever prescribed that he should be worshipped after this form. The child may be very innocent, and joyous in its sports, while it may have no thought of God, and certainly has no purpose of serving him.

In respect to things in the material world, it is ridiculous to inquire, Whether they have wills, and motives, and a purpose? The stars may move noiselessly on in their courses, and with regularity and constancy; and from this we may learn that we should be regular and constant in our service to God. But to call the motion of the stars religious worship, or any other operations of nature such, and to say that this is the sort of service that intelligent and voluntary beings must render to God, is certainly to speak very foolishly, to call it by no harsher name.

But true worship must also be an act of *faith.* "Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is," or exists: "and that he is the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him." This certainly shews the necessity of faith in worship; and affirms

Digitized by Google

distinctly, that acceptable worship cannot be offered without it. There is another declaration by the same apostle, of a similar import. "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Even if we had not these plain Scripture assertions, we might naturally have inferred, that a man must possess a knowledge of the Supreme Being, of his character and attributes, and must confide in and love him, before he can truly and properly serve him. The Samaritans in our Saviour's time, "worshipped they knew not what," and their worship is therefore spoken of by Christ as being of no avail.

Again we ask, What possible resemblance can there be between the homage of an intelligent being, rendered in the exercise of a believing spirit, and the movements of the heavenly bodies, the operations of material laws, or the gushings of childish hilarity? This is not only comparing things which have no similitude, but the comparison misleads the mind, falsifying and degrading the subject at the same time.

Public worship must also have *forms* and *outward expressions*. It seems to be the fashion in these times, to set forth religion as something so etherial as not to require any particular forms, and as hardly needing a language to give it expression. Forms are represented as antiquated incumbrances, belonging to an old dispensation which has now been done away. Forms are thought to be too earthly, too material, for spiritual worship. They are considered a hindrance to its exercise. We want, say the advocates of this system, a spiritual religion; one entirely disencumbered of those rituals which disfigured the Jewish economy. That might have sufficed for the age in which it existed; for that was, comparatively, an age of darkness. Society was then in its infancy. Great advancement has been made since that time. This is an age of light and intelligence, and we must have a religion to correspond.

No one can doubt that society has made some advancement since the Jews ceased to be a nation; but whether we have reached that stage of progress which would make it

Digitized by Google

advisable to dispense with all forms in the exercise of our religion, admits of a question. In the reasonings of these men, they seem to suppose that everything formal and ceremonial belonged exclusively to the Jewish religion; and that when this was abolished, as it was by Christ, all that was outward and formal in religion, ceased also, and henceforth worship is to be only in the spirit.

Now this conclusion is much too general in its nature. Whatever was peculiar in the Jewish economy has, no doubt, been abolished by the intention of Christ. As a large proportion of its rites and ceremonies were of this kind, these of course, have ceased. But it is not entirely correct to represent all that was ceremonial in the Jewish religion, as peculiar to that system. As long as our spirits dwell in fleshly bodies, as long as we continue in our present state, we shall need to have some form to our religion. It will not do, at present, to attempt to make it a soul, without a body, any more than it will suffice to make it all body, without spirit. While we continue flesh and spirit ourselves, and remain tenants of earth, we shall need a religion which, while it is preëminently spiritual, and has to do principally with the heart, finds its embodiment in suitable and appropriate forms. Thus it is that God has been worshipped in all ages, and so will he continue to be worshipped in this world, while there shall be worshippers in it. How it may be in heaven with disembodied spirits, we have not the means of knowing; only we know that the Scriptures represent them as giving utterance to their feelings in the language of praise. Sufficient for us is the fact, that such are our present necessities that we require some forms to our worship. If you tell a man he may dispense with these, you might as well tell him he may dispense with worship altogether; for if he does not worship in the use of these, and with appropriate language, he will not worship at all. In rendering to God religious homage, public assemblies are requisite, with prayer and praise, and other external expressions. Thus was God served by his ancient people, by patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. It is a mistake, to suppose that ceremonies commenced with the establishment of the Jewish economy.

Digitized by Google

They existed long before. Abel worshipped God according to some form; so did Abraham, and so did his successors. Some forms appear in the worship of saints after the ascension of Christ. Some externals must be observed, or we shall soon have no religion at all.

Worship should also have *time and place.* God ordained the Sabbath in the very infancy of society, and consecrated it to his special service. While he intended that his creatures should serve him every day, he designed the Sabbath for religious purposes exclusively; and the proper observance of this day is all that keeps religion alive in any country. Abolish the Sabbath, and godliness would soon cease from the land. The sacredness of this day should, therefore, be guarded with great care, this being the main external pillar for the support of Christian institutions. God should be served every day, but not every day alike. During the week, we may serve him in our temporal pursuits, if these are tempered with religion, and guided by its principles; but the Sabbath should be devoted exclusively to sacred duties, that we may learn what the principles of religion are, and receive to our hearts those influences which are needed in the active pursuits of life.

For this purpose, besides the Sabbath, places of worship are also needed, — houses of prayer. In communities where Christianity is recognized, such temples are found. But, by much that is said at the present day about worshipping God at all times, in all places, a secret feeling is produced that no particular edifices for this purpose are needed. What but this can be the effect of such expressions as those already referred to, where the preacher informs his hearers that "Christ nowhere utters a single word, enjoining the observance of the Sabbath, or attendance upon public worship;" tells them they are "oftentimes nearest to God, when they think themselves furtherest from the church;" and exhorts them to leave it, "not as if they were quitting, but as if they were entering the divine presence;" so making "the whole of life their sanctuary of worship;" "the true worshipper of the Father" being the man "who hardly knows that he has any religion, and who, indeed, has none — to speak of." How

Digitized by Google

deleterious must be the influence of such instructions! How destructive of the Sabbath, and of all outward forms in religion! Will any one who receives them feel any obligation to regard one day as more sacred than another, or to make any distinction in duties or places? To such an one will not all days, and places, and duties be alike? Where then will be the Sabbath, the sanctuary, and the public worship of God? They will have ceased, and all religion with them. Such will be the effect of carrying out the principles here advanced, however different the intention of the author.

But while we hold that worship should be intelligent and voluntary, offered in faith, and with a due regard to forms and ceremonies, to time and place, we maintain no less that it should be preëminently spiritual. It should be pervaded with true devotion. An attendance upon rites and forms, should never be allowed to destroy the vitality of worship. Religious service should never be a mere form, a body without a soul, a cold and lifeless corpse. It should rather be a body instinct in every part with a vital spirit. Outward forms are the body of religion, and religion itself can no more exist in this world without its appropriate forms, than a human being can exist here without a material nature. Religion is just as effectually destroyed, so far as relates to its earthly existence, when the outward forms are removed, as a human being when his body has returned to its native dust. We wish to retain the body of religion, that we may possess the soul also,— as we know the latter cannot be continued here without the former.

Let us have the spirit by all means; but let the body accompany it. The spirit is what gives pleasure to the rites of religion, and makes them profitable to the life and the soul. God is a spirit, and while he would be worshipped according to the forms which he has himself prescribed, he would still be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." Christ has told us that the time is approaching, — has indeed already come, — when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in this manner. It is the proper business of teachers in religion so to shape their discourses, that the effect shall be to promote this kind of worship. If they fail to do this, they

Digitized by Google

teach in a manner that causes the people to stumble at the very threshold of religion. Worship being a first duty in religion, if men take a wrong direction here, they will be liable to mistakes at every step of their progress, and such mistakes as can hardly fail to prove ruinous to the soul. When men are exposed to the influence of erroneous teaching in regard to public worship, or any other important subject, and are in danger of having their minds perverted by it, the admonition of Solomon is always seasonable: "Cease, my son, to hear instruction which causeth to err."

Worship cannot exist, except under some forms. These need not be pompous; they need not be cumbrous; nor yet need they be formal. No doubt the true worship of God has often been injured by an accumulation of outward ceremonies, as senseless and vapid as the brains that gave them birth. We are no advocates for these. The Word of God gives them no sanction. They are worse than useless; they are positively injurious. They smother every spark of religious emotion that may chance to lodge in the soul. If multiplied, men will rest in them, till their hearts become as void of devotion, as the ceremonies are of common sense. Let the forms be simple, if you please,— the simpler the better, but do not abolish them altogether. Let there be something to give expression to your homage, that it may not vanish in air, like the smoke from your dwelling.

THE INFLUENCES OF CHILDHOOD.

The gospel of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, is the only religion that cares for children. This makes the little ones of great value in the sight of God. It brings them early into the covenant of grace. It explains why they live; why so early they die; why, like the blossoms of the Spring, so many are blighted, so few come to maturity. It, alone, gives intimation of their estate in the eternal world.

Its spirit and teachings contrast strongly with the dreadful worship of Moloch, in which fathers led their sons, and

Digitized by Google

mothers their daughters, to the sacrifice, and cast them into the arms of the idol, to be consumed by the fires raging within it.

> "Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
> Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
> Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
> Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
> To his grim idol."

When we learn the disposition made of childhood in China, in India, and in such isles of the sea as are destitute of the gospel, we have occasion for devout thanksgiving, for the relations which the gospel sustains to childhood.

I. In this condition Jesus first came to us. So the Son of God appeared, when "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The Saviour could have visited the earth in the garb of an angel of light. Before he left heaven, or laid aside "the form of God," he decided whether to take on himself the form of an angel, or the seed of Abraham. As an angel he could have visited the earth, even as he appeared with the three in the midst of the fiery furnace; or as the angel who appeared to the father of John the Baptist; or as the Saviour met Saul of Tarsus; or as he was seen by John at Patmos.

In selecting the garb of human nature, beneath which to veil his divinity, he need not have been a babe in Bethlehem. He was under no necessity to be a child, "learning obedience from the things he suffered," growing in "wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Yet he did all this, and had ample reasons for so doing.

As a child, he brought the Father near to us. God never before seemed so condescending and compassionate. He has been heard at Sinai, when the "mountains flowed down at his presence." He has rode the cloudy car; he has appeared in the column of fire. But his appearing was always in majesty and terror. At his voice men feared and trembled, and desired "that the word should not be spoken to them any more."

Now "God is manifest in the flesh," and men behold the face of the child in whom "dwelt the fulness of the Godhead."

Digitized by Google

Mortals, with their hands, "have handled the Word of life." Clustering interests hang around that cradle; and as we view the child Jesus, and learn who he is, and for what he has taken "the form of a servant," and "was made in the likeness of sinful flesh," our holiest emotions are stirred within us.

That babe in the manger moves all worlds. Angels sweep down from the skies to attend him, — the air becomes vocal with the melody of heaven. The rulers are afraid, and take counsel. The stormy passions of men are hushed, as God introduces the Prince of Peace into the world. Wise men from afar come with their gifts to greet the royal stranger. Hell is moved by his coming. The appalling tidings runs through the dark caverns of despair,— The seed of the woman is come; the seed of the woman is born! And yet Jesus is but a child of one day; an infant in a manger.

So far as we can see, all this has little connection with the great work Christ came to do. It has little apparent connection with Calvary. Yet so the Saviour comes from heaven to man. The gospel and childhood are identified. Man, if he would be saved, must become like the infants. Their angels do always behold the face of God in heaven; and in the sight of God, infancy is of great price.

It is the time for Jesus to enter the covenant. So entered all the ancient people of God. At the early age of eight days, the Son of God had his formal connection with the church on earth, or he never formed such a connection. As a very great portion of our race dies in infancy, it may be one mode God in mercy has adopted to people heaven. Washed in the blood of the Lamb, redeemed by him who was once an infant, they may behold the face of the Father, and join with elder spirits in the song of redemption before the throne.

II. Childhood has a mysterious power on our race. There is a charm and mystery about childhood. The peril of its birth, its brief life, its early blight, often excites the question, Why has it lived at all, seeing it has lived apparently to so little purpose? But religion teaches that it has not lived in vain, though its life be brief as a passing shadow. It has

Digitized by Google

created maternal love; and when can that passion die? When can it forget the little one that cheered the heart, though but for a day? The emotions of that brief hour are imperishable. When death comes, and the flower is withered, the parent feels that the departed babe is a child in heaven. And as home was made brighter by its smile, so heaven seems more dear, because it is there.

The entrance of childhood breaks up the selfishness of the heart. It teaches us not to live for our single selves.

How great is the power of childhood on home. It tinges all the house. It touches every heart. Affection is cultivated; prudence is enjoined; industry becomes needful; and a care is felt that the example set before the little stranger be such as shall guide it into the path of peace.

That there are trials created by childhood will not be denied. But trials of a kind harder to be borne, attend its absence. The childless one roams from place to place, uneasy and unsatisfied. Imaginary ills are magnified at pleasure. Plants, birds, and other pets less desirable, are often sought as substitutes, and afford all the annoyance, with none of the blessings, of childhood.

The influence of childhood is not the same on all homes. Neither is that of religion. We speak of what it may be, and what it is, when the will of God is done. Mothers may be hardened against their young, as the best gifts of God may be abused, and even the mercy of God in Christ be perverted into a "savor of death unto death."

III. Childhood teaches our dependence on God. A child is born. The parents look, for the first time, on the bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. A being lives, having the nature, the infirmity, and the peculiarities of its parents. By their life it is to be educated. It is to repeat their existence in its own, and to transmit their constitutional infirmities to unborn generations. It has sobered that thoughtless girl; made a man of that heedless youth; and turned impenitent parents to God for help. It has aided in setting up the family altar. It has opened the Sacred Volume. And by thus bringing a blessing into the family which it has entered, childhood has received a blessing in return.

Digitized by Google

It is a matter of great interest to see childhood thus fulfilling its commission. A loving couple start in life gay and joyous. Music, mirth, and selfish pleasures fill up life. On that couple an infant smiles. Its feeble wail sounds in their ears. Those strange tones seem to change the man, the mother, the home. All is changed, and changed for life. New responsibilities and cares are felt; and the thoughtless are often constrained to look to God for help, to whom none look in vain. None who cast themselves and their children on God are left without a blessing. "Take this child," he says, "and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages." And when God removes children, their death is often sanctified. It affords clearer views of heaven, and excites a more ardent desire to join the loved ones who have gone before us.

The Bible tells us that children are a great blessing. "Happy is the man that has his quiver full of them." The highest promise to the barren is, that "she shall be the joyful mother of children." "Children's children are the crown of old men." And this is true, with all the cares, the trials, and the responsibility they bring.

God can use them in his service, as he used the sister of Moses, and the servant-girl in the family of Naaman. They, at least, can be made a means of discipline, and of trials needful to be borne. Often he takes them from the evil in the world, removes them when they become idols, and makes them instruments of the parents' salvation.

Let Christian parents bless God for the gospel by which they learn the value and the blessings of childhood. Give thanks to his name, who demands not the fruit of the body for the sin of the soul; but who receives them in sacrifice as they are fitted for heaven by early and holy training. Let them bring to Christ the lambs of the fold, and yield them up to him who died for them. Let them seal them on the forehead to the Father, Son, and Spirit, by the waters of baptism; and be true to the high trust, while life shall last. Then will the commission be accomplished; and to the faithful parent it will be finally said, "It is well with the child; — it is well with thee!"

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

UNITARIANISM ON THE MOVE. — To one who can look back to the period, not yet remote, when there was but one church of strictly orthodox stamp in Boston, it is matter of profound moral interest to ponder upon the vast change which has taken place in favor of evangelical religion. Our present remarks will be confined to the changes which have taken place within the pale of Unitarianism itself,— and changes by which it has been brought to follow orthodox fashions, after having first resisted them.

We well remember when evening meetings for religious purposes, an old and approved orthodox practice, were regarded by Unitarians with great aversion, and severely condemned as needless, hurtful, and demoralizing. Such meetings are not, as yet, extremely frequent among them; and perhaps never will be; still they are by no means very unfrequent, and when they occur, seem to excite quite a sensation. — We have not forgotten, too, when Sabbath Schools, whose usefulness and necessity are now universally acknowledged, were regarded by the "liberal party" with undisguised contempt, and condemned as an unjustifiable device to forestall the religious opinions of the young. But now our neighbors are zealous amateurs in this important department of religious education. — When the Temperance Reform was first started by the zeal and moral courage of the orthodox churches, it was long frowned upon as "a sectarian thing," a subtle contrivance to bring water and grist to the orthodox mill. But, at last, they were constrained to embrace this noble enterprise, and many of them are honorably distinguished by their struggles and sacrifices to promote it; though we fear that they are not sufficiently thankful to those orthodox friends who dragged them into such a respectable and useful position.— It is not long, since they were famous for the vehemence of their attacks upon creeds in all forms, and on all occasions. But, within a year or two, they tell us, in the Christian Examiner, and elsewhere, that these symbols of union and agreement are indispensable to Christian character and to combined religious effort. They have learned, with surprising facility, (thanks to Mr. Theodore Parker!) to make the necessary discrimination between the use and abuse of creeds. — They were once noted for their strong dislike of doctrinal preaching, and for their prejudices against doctrines generally. But now, they eagerly adopt the once hated terms, — trinity, depravity, atonement, and regeneration; insisting that they hold to these doctrines in the true sense of the terms,— though this sense is very peculiar, and adopted only by themselves. It is devoutly to be hoped, that, when they become a little more familiar with these names, they will feel constrained, by the force of truth and consistency, to confess the very things themselves according to the established orthodox meaning of these terms. — The cause of missions was once opposed by the Unitarians, as a sample of that obtrusive Phariseeism which compasses sea and land to make a proselyte; and for this purpose neglects the poor and degraded around our own doors. Now, however, they are making strenuous exertions to

Digitized by Google

impregnate themselves with the missionary spirit, and to become active propagators of their faith. — Revivals, also, which once they detested, as baneful outbreaks of fanatical excitement, they are coveting, at least as to the appearance of them; and are beyond measure delighted, when they can sustain a series of meetings where the brethren stimulate the revivification of the religious sentiment by their prayers and exhortations.

We must say, that these and other changes in the temper and practice of Unitarians are truly encouraging. For, first, they are a practical concession of the wisdom and piety of the orthodox, in instituting under the divine blessing, all these good works! And, secondly, they awaken the hope, that many Unitarians will press on still farther, not stopping in a mere formal or professional orthodoxy, which never yet saved a soul, but entering into the life and reality of our pure and Scriptural faith.

THE MEXICAN WAR. — So great has been the crowd of important public events filling up the time since the termination of this odious war, that its hateful features are too much forgotten. It is recently, however, recalled to mind by two interesting publications. One of these is a volume containing a "Review" of the Mexican War, being the prize-essay, by Rev. A. A. Livermore, of Keene, N. H. It is a minute history and criticism of the origin and motives of that contest. The other book is still more curious. It is an account of all the transactions, translated from the Mexican historians, and presenting their view of things as they occurred. Its translator, whose English is not the most pure and intelligible, is Colonel Ramsey, who served in our army against Mexico. It is exceedingly graphic, as well in its descriptions of the rivalries, revolutions, civil discords and anarchies, which betrayed their country to ruin, as it is in the narrative of the battles by which that ruin was consummated. The tone of the book is exceedingly plaintive, and excites commiseration for that unwarlike and inefficient race, who are skilled in nothing pertaining to battle, except its noise. We would not exchange the glory of a single faithful teacher in the Sabbath School, for all the fame of dispersing the gay Mexican cavalry with our terrible artillery, or shattering their irresolute columns of infantry with our murderous bayonets. We can see some reason and propriety in the efforts of an invaded people to defend their homes by force, if they can. But the attempt to settle the right and wrong of national disputes by the arbitration of steel and saltpetre, seems as senseless as the old custom of deciding points of law by judicial combat. Not more absurd was the strife of a pair of knights, in the eleventh century, clad in complete armor, to decide by ordeal of battle, between the claims of two rival liturgies. Yet, even in those "times of ignorance," there were not wanting men who saw the sin and folly of maintaining truth so falsely. St. Ivo, bishop of Chartres, in the time of William Rufus, boldly declared, "that innocence thus defended is destroyed." So we fear that it has fared with the justice of our claims on Mexico; if, indeed, it can be at all made to appear, that our claims were ever founded in justice.

Digitized by Google

ELOQUENCE A VIRTUE. — This is a brief, but very intellectual, treatise, containing the outlines of a systematical rhetoric, written in German by that elegant rhetorician, Theremin; and translated by "one of like coat," the accomplished Professor Shedd, of Burlington. The title, "Eloquence a Virtue," somewhat startled our sensitive conscience, by suggesting that, if this be so, alas, what sinners we are! But a moment's reflection satisfied us, that we ought to submit to this just condemnation, in order that true rhetoric may be justified. If it is ever to be raised above suspicion and secret dislike, it must be made a virtue, and not, as usually it is, an art. The admiration of rhetoric as an art must, as Kant says, "be always accompanied with the disagreeable feeling of disapprobation toward a cunning art, which understands how to use men as machines," by playing skilfully on their weaknesses and passions. It was in this way that Theodore Beza, the noble colleague of John Calvin, was once brought into difficulty. "Having a strain, without straining for it, of native eloquence, he *spake* that which others *studied* for." Being summoned before the consistory of Geneva, and publicly checked for preaching too eloquently, he plead that what they called eloquence in him, was not affected, but natural; and meekly promised to endeavor more plainness for the future. But it is useless to frown at the fair flowers of rhetoric, which, as President Hopkins has finely said, "not less than the flowers of the field, have their origin in a material soil." They also are a part of nature; and nature, in the end, is sure to have her way. Rhetoric is a necessary of life. Expression is as indispensable to thought, as form is to matter; and its proper dignity seems to be asserted by Theremin, when he maintains that it is to be exalted to the rank of a virtue, as being an ability to exert a right moral influence, by presenting truth in the most forcible and winning form. It is in this sense, that John Norton, the old Puritan pastor of Boston, sententiously said: "Christ evidently held forth is divine eloquence." The subject is so tempting, that we can with difficulty refrain from enlarging upon it. But we forbear, lest we may but "darken counsel" by means of our unworthy verbiage; remembering that

> "A mist of words,
> Like halos round the moon, though they enlarge
> The seeming size of thoughts, make the light less."

We rejoice that Professor Shedd has done another good work, and done it so well. Rhetoric among us has been too much neglected; and when cultivated, it has been rather as a collection of distinct rules or precepts, than as a system having its own proper beginning, midst, and end. We hope that Theremin's work will help to a higher appreciation, and better culture, of this admirable "virtue."

LYCEUMS. — As the "lecturing season" is fully set in, we feel disposed to offer a remark or two, upon the moral influence of our Lyceums. These associations had an orthodox origin among us; and for a long time, they were exceedingly useful in awaking the popular mind to a taste for literary pleasures. Of late years, however,

Digitized by Google

the business of lecturing before them has become almost monopolized by a clique of literati, somewhat indefinitely known as the "mutual admiration club;" who by a persevering practice of puffing each other into notice, make their rounds through all the village lyceums, where they are marvelled at as the "very rage of fashion at its height." Their lectures they boast of as a valuable "literary property;" and when they have worn them out, at the season's end, the same are made into books, and sold to all who would be fashionable buyers. The business is getting to be quite a trade. Many of these performances, no doubt, possess great literary merit, and others are sufficiently harmless. But they are, for the most part, pervaded by a spirit of ultraism and infidelity, which breaks out more or less openly, and diffuses a leaven of dislike to all the institutions, social and religious, which we inherit as the choicest legacy of the old Puritanism of New England. Nor is this all. Some of these missionaries of the nether kingdom, like Parker and Emerson, are enabled by means of their lyceum-patronage, to maintain a position before the public, which they must otherwise lose,—a position from which they can more effectually carry on their main design of subverting the Christian religion. Vain design! They may and do destroy the souls whom they delude; but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. These enemies of the cross of Christ would, long since, have sunk into comparative neglect, had they not by their system of lecturing kept themselves prominent before the world, as almost the only men for the business, and men who must surely be as eminent in the pulpits where they profane the Sabbath, as in the lyceums where they tickle the ears, and poison the principles, of a large portion of the community. Here is an evil. Let the vigilant defenders of the truth guard against the insidious danger.

THE WHALE AND HIS CAPTORS.—If we might borrow from the boys' vocabulary an epithet of most exalted commendation, we would say at once, that this is a *whaling* great book. Not that it is so large of size, but huge in merit. It is brimful of information, and most lively and poetical in style; and whoso shall take it up to read in a heavy and spiritless hour, will find it good "as spermaceti for an inward bruise." It has a highly moral and religious tone. Like the coats which their father gave to "Lord Peter, Martin, and Jack," which coats perfectly fitted every wearer, whatever his size or build, so this book is sure to fit every reader, old or young, lively or dull. The only objection that can be made to it, is the danger that our boys may be fascinated by its pages, to run away, and go on whaling voyages. But there is this to console us, in case such mischance should happen, that the fugitives, if they ever get safe home, will return, like the author of this book, abundantly the wiser for their rough and romantic experience. The happy author of this charming book, is Rev. Henry T. Cheever, to whom that race of monstrous sovereigns of the deep ought gladly to pay a yearly tribute of the best of their lamp-oil, for the eloquence with which he has depicted their virtues, and lamented their woes. His glowing descriptions are chiefly from his own observation while cruising on that vast ocean, which is any-

Digitized by Google

thing but *Pacific* to its hugest inhabitants, hunted and harpooned as they are in all their vast retreats. He bids fair to become among authors, what the whale itself is among the tenants of the sea; and we wish him the best of luck in escaping from the barbed irons of cruel critics and reviewers.

LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF ROBERT SOUTHEY.— The Harpers are issuing, in six serial pamphlets, this interesting work, edited by the son of the Laureate. It consists, in part, of a delightful autobiography of Southey's early life; and in greater part, of his friendly epistles. It is no more than right, that such men as take up so large a share of the public attention, should give us some account of themselves; and, perhaps, this cannot be better done than by collecting their own letters, frankly stating fresh occurrences, and their feelings at the time. Many fine biographies, like Middleton's Life of Cicero, have been chiefly framed in this way. Old Cardinal Baronius, who was well skilled in such matters, has truly said, that "the best history is epistolary history." So much does this mode of setting forth the very nature and life of things commend itself, that some of the most celebrated works of fiction, like "Sir Charles Grandison," have been composed in the form of letters. As to Mr. Southey, we know not whether we are more stiffly opposed to the radicalism and socialism of his younger days, or to the high toryism and old-fashioned Church-of-Englandism of his riper years. But for all that, we like him, and like to read him; we like his poetry, and still more his prose. He was a man of mind and feeling. He was crammed with all kinds of knowledge, and lavish in spending it. "His head was a well-filled treasury, and his tongue was a golden key to unlock it."

GERMAN ACCOUNT OF THE PURITANS.— On taking up the January number of that admirable Quarterly, the Bibliotheca Sacra, we find its contents of even more than usual interest. But elective affinity, or some other occult influence, led us at once to Professor Stowe's review of the history of the colonization of New England, written in German, by Madame Talvj,— a name our readers may pronounce for themselves in any way they may find most convenient and agreeable. It is matter of rejoicing that the Germans have the opportunity of reading such a book as this is said to be. Though the lady is not wholly free from erroneous impressions respecting our Puritan sires, she appears to have a just and generous appreciation of their character and merits. But the Professor's review of Talvj has a charm of its own, independent of the interest of his subject. It is redolent of the aroma of his rare genius, and highly spiced with that pungent wit which all the waters of Brattleboro can never soak out of him. His vindication of the pilgrims is full of heart and zeal; and his castigation of their detractors is, as Dr. Cox would say, "most severely kind." The chastisement is so obviously just, though well laid on, as to excite no sympathy for the culprits. Should there ever again be any descendant of the Puritans, so degenerate as to repeat the crime of throwing aspersions on their sacred names, it is to be hoped that he will be "passed along" to the judgment-seat of this

Digitized by Google

worthy son of New England. His article reminds us of a remark made by the lamented Professor Dod, in the Princeton Review. Speaking of Professor Park's "Familiar Lecture" on the character and habits of Dr. Emmons, he says: "This is such an article as could only be written by a man of genius and a New Englander." We apply this most fully to Dr. Stowe's article, which shews him forth as a man of genius, and one of the liveliest of "live Yankees." Rumor says, that Madam Talvj is a German lady married to a very learned Professor in one of our theological seminaries, who boasts his descent from that arch-puritan, John Robinson of Leyden.

COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK INDEPENDENT. — This really able, but pugnacious, paper plumes itself upon being the "very pink of courtesy." We doubt not it abounds in that engaging virtue, for we have heard of a boy whose grandame accused him, in New England phrase, of "having no manners;" but who cleared himself by replying that he must have more "manners" than most folks, because he had never used up any part of his native stock. Charles Lamb used playfully to insist that lying is a virtue, because it economizes truth, which is a commodity too precious to spend on all occasions! In some such way, our irate brethren of the Independent, must vindicate themselves from the charge of vulgar passion and low railing against us, by insisting that their loved and treasured quality of *courtesy* is too valuable for daily use. We fear that, in this item of expense, they are getting to be rather miserly.

ORDINATIONS.

Dec.	6.	Mr. Asa C. Bronson, Hanson, Ms.
Jan.	1.	Mr. Lewis Goodrich, Dedham, Me.
"	"	Mr. John W. Harding, Longmeadow, Ms.
"	"	Mr. Edward W. Clark, Bethesda Church, Reading.
"	"	Mr. John E. Emerson, Whitefield Church, Newburyport.
"	"	Mr. Edward K. Alden, Yarmouth, Me.
"	"	Mr. Stephen A. Holt, Milton, Vt.
"	"	Mr. J. Augustin Hood, Middleton, Vt.
"	"	Mr. Reuben Hatch, Windham, Vt.

INSTALLATIONS.

Nov.	21.	Rev. C. S. Sherman, Naugatuc, Con.
Dec.	5.	Rev. James Holmes, Auburn, N. H.
"	19.	Rev. George Goodyear, South Royalton, Ms.
Jan.	2.	Rev. Nelson Clarke, Quincy.
"	"	Rev. Otis Holmes, Northwood, N. H.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Dec.	2.	Rev. Asa King, Canterbury, Con. æ. 78.
"	14.	Rev. Saul Clark, Meriden, Con. æ. 60.

Digitized by Google

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY

FOR 1850.....VOL. IV.

THE original Editor of this Work, on resuming his former relation to it as its only responsible conductor, wishes to return his warm thanks to those numerous friends who have heretofore aided the work by their communications, or by their personal influence in its behalf. He would especially render his thanks to those brethren, with whom he was united in carrying it on during the past year. He can now, with propriety, testify to the laboriousness, zeal, and punctuality, with which they fulfilled the duty assigned them; and to the gratifying unanimity which has marked all their proceedings, though every variety of theological sentiment recognized among the Orthodox was represented in their number. The present Editor feels that he has derived the most essential and permanent benefit from his intimate association with them through the labors of that year; and is happy in being permitted to rely on their aid and advice, as future occasion may require. It will be his endeavor, that the work shall continue to exhibit, as it has done, the Orthodoxy of New England. Important as may be the points disputed among us as brethren, they are of far less consequence than the grand doctrines of the Cross on which all are substantially agreed, and the opposing errors which on every side rise up against the common faith. Any attempt to array the peaceful and united churches of Massachusetts, or other States, into rival schools or hostile factions, is to be deprecated with the utmost earnestness.

We do not wish to have any more of controversy on our pages than may be necessary for due interest and instruction in the questions of the day. "Heresy hunting" is no part of our business. The tables, in this respect, are turned, and it is heresy which often hunts us. But when it comes rushing at us with open throat, we shall neither fly nor hide. We shall meet it manfully with all suitable weapons, whether of argument, sarcasm, or Scripture.

There will be no change in the general character of THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY from what it was last year, unless it be in the attempt to make it more popular and domestic. Though arrangements have been made for securing valuable assistance, the Editor solicits still further co-operation, (which will not be wholly unrequited,) of those numerous brethren, both among the ministry and laity, whose ready pens and fervent minds are needed to vary and enrich its successive issues. May the Divine blessing attend these efforts to maintain and spread the truth in Christ!

A. W. McCLURE.

Digitized by Google

THE SUBSCRIBERS,—believing that such a work as THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY is needed, that it has hitherto been useful, and is destined to an increasing circulation and influence,—cordially recommend it to the continued confidence and patronage of the evangelical community.

N. ADAMS,
JOHN A. ALBRO,
E. N. KIRK,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THIS Work will henceforth be issued from the Office of THE PURITAN RECORDER. The two publications, however, will be as distinct as they ever were, each pursuing independently its own appropriate objects, under separate editorial arrangements.

Communications relating to the editorial department, will be addressed to Rev. A. W. McCLURE; and those belonging to the publishing department to WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & COMPANY, 22 School street, Boston.

PROPOSALS TO MINISTERS AND OTHERS.

We invite the attention of Pastors and others to the following proposals:

1. Any pastor or other person who will send us the names of four new subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER or THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, with the pay ($2,00 each), shall receive The Puritan Recorder or The Christian Observatory for one year.

2. Any pastor or other person who will send us a less number of names than four, for either or both of the above publications, with the money for the same, shall be credited 50 cents for each name, in payment for the publication which he may select.

3. Any person who will send us more than four names, and pay for the same, may retain 50 cents per name, as his commission.

We hope that these proposals will induce many to make a special effort, who have expressed a wish for these publications, but for want of pecuniary ability have not taken them. We hope also that many ministers, who are now subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER, will secure to themselves THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY by introducing it among their people.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.

Digitized by Google

Mrs Jenkins

Vol. 4.] MARCH, 1850. [No. 3.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

A. W. McCLURE, Editor.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.
NO. 22 SCHOOL STREET.
1850.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page.
The Middle of the Nineteenth Century,	97
God Known by His Judgments,	105
Conservatism,	114
Rev. Benjamin Wood, as a Preacher,	117
Michael Wigglesworth,	122
Reviews:	
Thirteenth Annual Report of the Board of Education, The Massachusetts System of Common Schools,	131
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
Threats of Disunion,	140
Dr. Woods's Theology, Vol. II.,	141
The Panoplist,	142
Dr. Hitchcock's Election Sermon,	142
Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society,	143
Valentines,	144
Ecclesiastical Lists,	144

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

The Publishers find that the work cannot be afforded to clergymen, more than to others, at less than the full subscription price; and, therefore, it will be furnished to ALL subscribers at two dollars per annum. We hope that this change, which is made from necessity, and not from inclination, will meet with general approbation.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 22 School Street, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO., Publishers,
No. 22 School St., Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863 Sept. 12.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. IV. MARCH, 1850. No. 3.

THE MIDDLE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THE Ruler of the universe has fixed the time, place, and circumstances of the birth and probation of every human being. He watches in wisdom over the ages, and the succession of generations; and every individual is under moral obligation to study God and his providence as they relate to his times, and to act as best he may for his own age. It should be the holy ambition of every soul, to live so as to make a good mark upon his day, and so as to leave the world better. than he found it. Every era has its dark and light shades, and its peculiar trials and duties. At the same time, some periods are more alive with great principles, and more pregnant with great events and results, than others. There are crises in history. There are tides in the affairs of men. The destiny of centuries is often crowded into a single year, or hung suspended upon one transaction.

Who does not feel that the nineteenth is the most interesting of the sixty centuries of human history, excepting that in which the Saviour of the world was born? The peculiar ideas and work of the century, seem to hinge upon the central years,—upon this very period. We know not what another half century may disclose; but we do know that it is not cant to say, that this is a wonderful part of a most wonderful era. Upon this culmination of the century, then, let us plant our feet, while we review the past, apprehend the present, and anticipate and prepare for the future.

Digitized by Google

When the century opened, William Pitt was the Premier of England, and Napoleon was first Consul of France; and Europe was beginning to boil like a seething pot. The startling events which followed, are familiar to every person of intelligence. At home, John Adams was President of the Republic, and our country was weeping over the fresh tomb of her Washington. The century, in short, has been marked by the wild daring of a master mind; the strife of armies, the convulsion of empires, and the rapid demolition and creation of thrones and of states. The human mind was never so wakeful as during the last fifty years, nor the human hand so busy. Hence the century has been distinguished for the wondrous achievements of physical science and art. Many of the physical sciences were born in this century, and all have been greatly perfected. Nature has been resolved into its original elements, and their simple and combined powers made subservient to the useful arts, and taught to do the work of animals and men. The steamboat and the railroad, and the electric-telegraph, are the wonders of this century. Their influence upon the moral and religious interests of mankind, is not unappreciated by the intelligent Christian. They are the ministers of God, and the heralds of the kingdom of his Son. We cannot say that any invention, or discovery, or science, is unimportant in Providence. As one result of physical progress, our own country has been rapidly extending the national domain, and increasing in population, wealth, importance, greatness, and power. The annihilation of time and space by human skill and genius, is not only binding together the increasing states of this confederacy, but harmonizing the world. In the physical aspects of Christendom, and most of all, of this nation, how changed is everything since the commencement of the century!

This century has been marked, also, by the recognition, on the part of society, of the claims of suffering humanity. It is pleasing to think that the deaf and dumb, and the blind, and the insane, and the orphan, and the poor, and the ignorant, and the sinful, as never before, have been the objects of Christian beneficence and care. This sympathy has reached the sons and daughters of Africa, hitherto the common prey

Digitized by Google

of mankind, and the long-neglected slave. It has been in the nineteenth century, that the arguments and eloquence of Clarkson, and Wilberforce, and Fox, and Burke, convinced the world of the horrors of the slave-trade and of slavery. The rights and duties of man as man, have never been so fully understood and acknowledged, as they are at the present time.

Another thing which has been peculiar to the century, is the power of moral ideas over mere force. Public opinion, and the might of truth and right have come to be the prevalent agencies in human affairs. The common sentiment of civilization is stronger than cunning diplomacy, or great generalship, or the enginery of war. This principle has led men into various associations for benevolent and reformatory objects, and for mutual improvement and advantage. Neither popular vice, nor public wrong, have been able to stand before the concentration of moral opinions. The sword has lost much of its power, and right and truth are getting to be enthroned upon the world's mind.

But there is another thing for which the century has been still more honored, and that is the fact that God, since it began, put the missionary spirit into the heart of American Christians, and greatly revived it among Christians abroad. Across the seas, and around the capes and the world, and up the Mediterranean, and the Indian ocean, and the China sea, to the most distant East, and the islands of the West, have gone nearly two thousand holy men, bearing to the heathen the lamp of knowledge, and the olive branch of peace, and the standard of the cross. They go as a corps of literary and scientific men to explore the earth. They go as the pioneers of light and civilization. They go as the preachers of the gospel. And every true heart exclaims, "God speed them!" At the dawn of the century there were only about four millions of Bibles on earth, in not far from forty-five different languages. Now, the number of copies exceeds thirty millions; and they are printed in about a hundred and fifty languages of the earth. The Word of God has been translated into tongues spoken by six hundred millions of the human race. Protestant Christendom pays two millions of

Digitized by Google

dollars annually, to Foreign Missions. We have listened to the command: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." The predicted time has come: "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Who has not felt that the piety of the cloister is obsolete, and that the religion of benevolent action is in the ascendant, and the great demand of the age?

There is another peculiarity of the century, which ought not to be omitted; and that is, the increased rapidity with which Christian civilization works. It was one of the curious aphorisms of the father of Samuel J. Mills, that "God is never in a hurry." And in the past centuries, God, if we may so speak, has not been in a hurry. But in the first half of the nineteenth century, it really seems that God, in his providence, has been hastening events in his time. Within this period more has been done for humanity in a single year, than used to be accomplished in an age. The wheels of Christ's chariot are on fire with their swift rotations. Think how God is peopling our territories upon the Pacific coast, and bringing Christianity to bear upon heathenism! Think how Saxon protestantism, expressing its giant mind through the English language, is throwing out its arms of power over the families, and tribes, and nations of the whole earth!

But, let us pass to say that the century has been precious as a season of revivals of religion. These revivals have been enjoyed by the churches at home, and in Europe, and at the different missionary stations; and the dear scenes of pentecost have been often repeated. There has been joy in the church on earth, and among the angels in heaven, over a vast multitude of new-born souls.

Those enemies who have been wont to say of our Zion, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall," are full of wonder, that the evangelical church and ministry were never as potential in our country, as at this very moment. There never was

Digitized by Google

a time, when there was so little infidelity among influential minds, and the mass of the people; and when there was so large a proportion of the population connected with Christian churches. It would be safe to go farther, and say, that, in no previous century of human history, has the Word of God exerted as much influence upon mankind. Unbelief, indeed, is better organized than heretofore, but this only proves that the sword of truth has been sharpened in these years. The haters of Christ have always verily thought that the church of God was at the point of death. Nor is there any reason why the good man should despond at the evils of the age, although they are readily conceded to be many and great. "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this."

But, guided by the light which we have thus far collected, it is time to anticipate the latter half of the century. May we not soberly expect that knowledge is to confer yet higher benefits upon humanity, and that mind will obtain a more complete supremacy over mere force, and that the rights of the individual will be better appreciated? May we not hope that Christians will more perfectly know the holy philosophy of living, and manifest a larger share of Christ-like beneficence? May we not believe that the Bible is to be made accessible to every creature? Our faith assures us that all these things will take place before the century shall end. Up the Amazon, and the Rio de la Plata, and the Senegal, and the Congo, and the Indus, and the Ganges, and the Hoang Kiang, and the Kiang Ku, and the Hoang Ho, and the Amoor, and around the unexplored coasts of Japan, will go the steamships of Christianity, bearing the messengers of the Prince of peace.

So far as now appears, the latter part of this century is, by way of eminence, to be one of strife between true and false religion. The best students of the Scriptures and of Providence, have long thought, that the last half of the nineteenth century would be a period of intense interest to the church of God. In 1825, Canning gave it as his opinion that the next war which would be kindled in Europe, would be a war

Digitized by Google

of opinions. It was this new power in national hostilities, which he feared. The anticipated war of opinions has *begun*, and has raged for nearly two years. The masses of the old world began to see that despotism is supported by the prevailing forms of religion, and they rose up in their might, to redress their wrongs. At that moment, the heads of the Greek and Latin churches, the Czar of Russia and the Pope of Rome, entered into an alliance to put down the rising spirit of liberty. It is admitted by the defenders of the Papacy in both hemispheres, that the existence of their church is incompatible with the prevalence of republicanism in the Roman states.

Indeed, at this very time, false opinions in religion rule continental Europe, and insolently set their foot on the neck of the people. Why the French intervention in behalf of the Pope? Why, in the face of the civilized world, and of heaven, must Hungary be blotted from the list of nations? We have only to say that the Magyars were beginning to be protesters, and that Kossuth was a Bible-reader. Every shuffle in the cards of diplomacy, every step of the soldier, and every stroke of the sword, is guided by an opinion,—a religious idea. Why were the republicans of Rome left to struggle and die without aid or sympathy? Why, alas! must they fall by the hands of brother republicans? Why, under French rule, is Dr. Achilli a prisoner in the castle of St. Angelo? The only answer that can be given is, that Papists vote, and that Frenchmen are the tools of their intriguing priests.

Think not that our country is free from the dominion of the Roman Pontiff. Why, not a great while since, did the politicians go through the farce of holding a public meeting in New York to sympathize with the Pope, and puff him as the great reformer and model man of the age? Why was Bishop Hughes an invited guest at a Pilgrim festival? Why were the sympathies of the late American Consul at Paris so anti-American? Why did the American flag, through our representative at Rome, protect the enemies against the friends of liberty? Why have American citizens contributed more than twenty-five thousand dollars to support Austrian troops?

Digitized by Google

And there is ground for suspicion, that some of the attention shewn to Father Mathew in this country, has not been prompted by pure love to the cause of temperance. It is remarkable, that on the other side of the water, the infidels and priests have shaken hands against civil and religious liberty. Among us, every close observer must have noticed that the enemies of evangelical religion fraternize with the Romanists, and laud the Pope.

This war of opinions must and will be fought in this century. It will be fought by spiritual, and, possibly, by carnal, weapons. We see all Christendom taking sides, and boldly rallying around the standard either of Christ, or of Anti-Christ. We have seen the skirmishing which precedes the final battle. The people will not obtain the Bible without a contest; and before the century closes, blood may flow like water. "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." The supper of the great God must be prepared; for it is the purpose of heaven that the Lamb should prevail against the beast, and those who bear his image; and that the days of Papal power should be numbered and finished. The question, then, as to whether the people shall read the Word of God, and believe and act accordingly, is to be the great question of the remainder of this century. Kings will stake their thrones, and ministers their places, and politicians their reputation, upon that question. Civil society will be shaken, and armies will go into the deadly strife upon it. People, in general, are not aware how much religious opinions have to do in this world's affairs. But we may depend upon it, they are to be the controlling principles of what remains of the nineteenth century.

If these things be so, it is plain that no person can be fitted to act his part in the latter half of the century, without a thorough knowledge of the subject of religion. The young should, therefore, study religion as a *science*. They should study it in its doctrines and duties, and in its ecclesiastical development. No person can understand his age, and the motive power of national policy, without an acquaintance with religious opinions. Why has Thiers smothered the

Digitized by Google

aspirations, and belied the promises, of his youth? What brought a change over the mind of Guizot? What has become of the democracy of De Tocqueville? Why had the United States government no sympathy to express for the democrats of Italy? If we may speak out the secret, it is that the head of the Roman see has at his beck the blind and vassal suffrages of millions.

Questions of religion are even now the most important study for the men of the present century. That person is criminally ignorant who does not understand that a spurious Christianity is the fell star which rules the destiny of the nations. The masses are fast coming to see that ecclesiastical is the prop of political tyranny, and the worst foe of the species. Our age, indeed, calls for an *active* piety. "All things are full of labor." But our zeal should be enlightened by the truest Christian knowledge. For there is nothing to oppose to error and false religion but the simple truth of Jesus, as that truth is revealed in the Bible. There is nothing, but the gospel, which can put down oppression and elevate humanity.

Let us not think that, by the recent reverses in Europe, the shadow on the dial of time has gone backward. The order which reigns there, as it was once said to reign in Warsaw, is but the slumber of the volcano, which is preparing to shake the earth. God has whispered it to the hearts of the people, that the heads of the Greek and Latin hierarchies are the fanatical and common enemies of the human race. The love of true liberty, and the love of false religion, are beginning to struggle for the mastery in the hearts of the millions of our race.

Never since God started our planet in its career of ages, has it seen such an era as this. If we might have chosen our time to live, with the light which we now have, we would have selected the present. At this central stand-point of the nineteenth century then, let the great ideas and duties of the day, fill our hearts. It is our faith, that this world belongs to Christ's crown and kingdom; — a free gospel is our motto, and our hope is in God, who is the Saviour of Israel, and the almighty Ruler of the world.

Digitized by Google

GOD KNOWN BY HIS JUDGMENTS.

Our constant readers will remember, that, in two previous articles, the judgments of God upon the heathen have been considered, as making him known in the earth. In the present article, the divine judgments upon *civilized nations* will be considered, as an equally striking illustration of the truth, that "the Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth."

The idea has gained considerable currency, that, as nations will not exist in their collective capacity in the coming world, they must suffer in this world the retributive judgments which, by their public acts of wickedness, they may provoke. Without stopping to inquire with nice discrimination, how far this sentiment is correct, it is sufficient to say, that judgments do in fact fall upon nations *as such*, when they become thoroughly contaminated with impiety and vice. These judgments may have regard to the sins of individuals; for it is these which, in the aggregate, make up the sins of the nation. But these sins may, in many cases, be committed by men who are possessed of high political power; and who, in the official exercise of that power, commit the most egregious offences. As they are the representatives of the nation, the whole nation is involved more or less in the guilt, and in the judgment which follows. No doubt, those who are leaders in transgressions of a public character will be held accountable for the amount of injury which they inflict upon their fellow-creatures; but this does not exempt from suffering the mass of the subjects of that government whose acts incur the divine displeasure.

Jehovah has said to all nations having the knowledge of his revealed will: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would bene-

Digitized by Google

fit them." How have these words been verified in the history of civilized nations for centuries past! And how has the Lord of nations, by means of this history, been making himself known in the earth! Nations to which the gospel has been preached have walked after the imagination of an evil heart. God has threatened to smite them with the rod. In some instances, they have repented, and reformed; and he has repented of the evil he thought to do unto them. In other instances, the warning voice being unheeded, the rod has begun to smite; and then the nations have repented, and the rod has been removed. But in other instances, judgment after judgment has been sent, without bringing the guilty nation to repentance, until at length the forbearance of God could go no farther, and the nation was plucked up and destroyed. In all these cases, and in the last by terrible things in righteousness, is the Lord made known by the judgments which he executeth. What can be more reasonable, than that where the Lord has dispensed peculiar blessings, he should send peculiar judgments, if these blessings are abused? He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. Nations as well as individuals are subject to this criterion. We proceed to illustrate this principle by a reference to some nations,—to one in particular,—which have enjoyed great religious privileges, and have incurred great guilt and ruin by the abuse of them.

Modern France undoubtedly holds a prominent place among those nations. It is not necessary for the present design, to prove that the inhabitants of France are sinners above all others that dwell on the face of the earth; but that they afford a striking illustration of the truth, that God is known by his judgments upon nations which in a remarkable degree abuse the blessings of revelation.

The points to be established are these;—that France has been favored in a high degree with the teachings of revelation; that she has been distinguished among civilized nations for her contemptuous treatment of revelation; that, in consequence of this impiety, judgments have fallen upon her, which have filled the world with astonishment and dismay; and finally, that through these judgments, the Lord is making

Digitized by Google

himself known as the author of the Bible, and as pledged to make all revolutions in the earth subservient to the establishment of the Messiah's kingdom.

Centuries ago, France had the gospel preached within her borders. The effects of the apostolic zeal in the early proclamation of the cross were not confined to Palestine, Greece, and Rome; but extended to other countries, and among them to the beautiful region of the Loire, and the Seine. Brevity requires us to touch very slightly upon the earlier influences of Christianity upon the Gallican race; but we know that they were considerable, long before the corruptions which afterwards disgraced the Catholic church had assumed their decided character. It cannot, indeed, be denied, that these corruptions afforded a pretext for revolting from the restraints of revealed religion. Some apology can be offered for those who made their first attacks upon the gospel through the abominations of popery. Yet amidst these abominations, and in spite of them, there was much true light which might have been seen, if darkness had not been preferred. Some of the best Christians who have ever lived were found in the established church of France, during those successive generations in which the Papacy was doing its worst, both in doctrine and in practice. Though these were found chiefly among the poor and despised curates, and the common people instructed by them, yet sometimes a Fenelon appeared, adorned with learning, and having access to the first ranks of society, who proclaimed by precept and life, the truth as it is in Jesus.

The educated portions of French society had sufficient discernment to see the difference between the pretenders to religion, and the humble followers of the Lamb. They ought to have adhered to the truth, and rejected the pretension. But instead of this, they manifested a special hostility to the duties of religion, and to those who practised them. As light increased amidst the long-prevailing darkness, the struggle became more and more terrible between the advocates of the true gospel and the abettors of the Romish hierarchy in all its deformities. No doubt, the opposers of this spiritual despotism were sometimes, and to some extent,

Digitized by Google

actuated by a spirit which is not according to the meekness of Christ. They were imperfect, and could not be expected to rise entirely above the anti-Christian influences that surrounded them. But the Spirit of the Lord and of Christian liberty was with them; their numbers increased, and their power was felt. Had they been treated by the government with toleration, the whole history of the nation would have been changed from what it is. Their chief offence against the reigning powers was, that they were conscientiously opposed to the corruptions of the gospel which had found entrance into the church. To shew how much of the light of the gospel France had then enjoyed by their means, it is sufficient to say, that, just before the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, the celebrated Admiral Coligny presented a petition in their behalf before the king, assuring his majesty, with tears in his eyes, that there were two hundred thousand who were ready to sign the petition.

These protestants sympathized with the great movement that was then going on in Germany; and with the persecuted Christians of every nation who were feeling the smart of the Papal inflictions. Through the reformation, France had within her reach a better knowledge of the gospel than had prevailed for many generations past. We are assured by historians, that the doctrines of the reformed religion had made such progress at this time, that if they had advanced but a step further, the reformed would have become the predominant religion of France. If, therefore, this great nation took upon herself the responsibility of driving from her, as far as she was able, the true gospel and its followers, it was not for want of light. She had enjoyed abundant opportunities for knowing her Master's will. No modern nation has sinned against greater knowledge of the true God and Jesus the Redeemer.

What, then, must we expect, if we find her rejecting the doctrines of the cross, and persecuting the saints? What, then, shall God do with the nation, which, having in her bosom hundreds of thousands embracing the truths of the gospel, takes cruel counsel to exterminate them, for the simple reason that they had embraced those truths?

Digitized by Google

The more maturely we consider how France has treated the gospel which had been so faithfully preached to her, we shall feel the more deeply that she has been distinguished above almost all other nations for her abuse of Christianity. Persecution had been long going on, before the reformation; but it was reserved for that era, when the full blaze of truth was shining upon the face of the country, to give birth to a stupendous crime which could not have been perpetrated, had there been less conviction of the truth to be violently quenched. Indeed it was the very vividness of the spreading light, inspiring the dread of its national predominance, which led the powers of France to imbrue their hands in such unutterable guilt.

We refer, of course, to the infamous day of St. Bartholomew. According to a well-concerted plan, in the year 1572, a general massacre of the Protestants took place, throughout France. Coligny himself fell a victim, and his head was sent to Rome. The destruction effected, has scarce a parallel on the records of persecution. The murderers were known to each other by the sign of the cross. They spared neither the aged and infirm, nor the women and children. The bloody act was the act of France in her national character. The king placed himself at a window, that he might feast his eyes upon the butchery around his palace; and reiterated his orders that not a Protestant should be spared. He even fired upon them himself, and his guards practised upon them barbarities of every description, with a ferocious delight. The massacre continued for seven successive days. Multitudes of the citizens of one of the most enlightened of modern nations, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, within the influences of the rising and spreading light of learning and religion that beamed from the reformation, were put to death in cold blood, for no other offence than venturing to profess a religious faith embraced by nearly one half of the nation! Here is guilt enough to account for all the woes that have visited France since that time.

As the Jews, in reference to the death of Christ, dared to say: "His blood be on us, and on our children!" so said France of the murdered protestants; "Their blood be on

Digitized by Google

us, and our succeeding generations!" Dreadfully has the imprecation been realized.

But the measure of guilt with which France is chargeable was not yet full. Much is to be added to the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day. The blood of the martyrs in this case, as in former ages, was the seed of the church. The cause which seemed to be slain and buried, rose again. Protestantism once more prevailed. In the reign of Henry IV., the celebrated edict of Nantes gave liberty of worship to the children of the reformation. They became strong in all the provinces; and then another act of persecution was put forth in the name of France, exceeding in enormity that of which we have been writing. In order to see its full enormity, we must take into account the great progress which the reformed religion had now made in Europe. We must consider how clearly it had been demonstrated, that every blessing of this life follows in the train of the Bible received as the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice, and how far the dominant church had departed from this rule. We must consider the character of those Protestants who were about to be banished from France, — how peaceable, industrious, and exemplary in all things, even as they were required to be by that gospel which they had bound to their hearts.

In the reign of Louis XIV., and again in that of his successor, the revocation of the edict of Nantes renewed all the horrors of persecution. Remembering the blood which had so recently flowed, and fearing the repetition of the general slaughter, they fled into almost all the countries of the civilized world. So great an acquisition were they esteemed, that some nations,— as Sweden,— publicly invited them to their shores. England owes no small share of her prosperity to the manufacturing and commercial enterprise they brought with them. Our own country has testified to the excellent character of the Huguenots who found here a shelter from the raging storm.

But what shall we say of the nation that deprived itself, by iniquitous legislation, of the good influence of those Christians, who elsewhere have been a blessing to the world? When the cities of the plain have become such that Lot

Digitized by Google

must flee for his life, how long shall it be ere the Lord will rain down from heaven the desolating tempest?

Our limits will not permit us to go fully into the details of crime which precipitated France into her unequalled sufferings; yet we must not fail to note that grand trait in her character,—her open and rampant *atheism*. Her public acts, pronouncing death an eternal sleep, and deifying reason under the name and dress of libertinism, are too well known to need special notice. France, as a nation, had become infidel. Her wits, her orators, her statesmen, her ecclesiastics, had fallen into the dreadful gulph. The secret societies of the Continent spreading their influence everywhere, had come to regard it as the grand desideratum to root out from the public mind all reverence for the institutions of religion.

Christian philosophers have not failed to trace most of the calamities of France, to this contempt of God and his revealed word. To the charge of Mirabeau, and the Duke of Orleans, —both leading members of the Illuminati,—to the infidel pens of Voltaire and the host of scoffers that aided him in the crusade against the cross, is laid the fearful judgments that soon succeeded,—the universal licentiousness of morals, the recklessness, the blood, the nation's tears, the spectacle of ruin which made the world to shudder. Carlyle says: "The French revolution found its evangelist in Rousseau. His semi-delirious speculations on the miseries of civilized life, the preferability of the savage and such like, helped well to produce a whole delirium in France generally. He could be cooped into garrets, laughed at as a maniac, left to starve like a wild beast in his cage;—but he could not be hindered from setting the world on fire."

We are ready to join in ascribing a vast influence to the infidel writers of France in producing her woes; but there is another view of the subject which should not be passed over with a superficial eye. If infidelity, with her hands on the press and on secret societies, is chargeable with so much evil, we should not forget that the Encyclopedists and Illuminati were themselves the creatures of corrupt and persecuting Romanism. The nation had murdered or banished the best of her citizens, and given over the sway to false religion and

Digitized by Google

general immorality. Hence, secret unbelief pervaded the mass of the people, and the mask was at any moment ready to be thrown off.

When, therefore, the literature of the nation combined to attack the church, it had at first an apology in the vices of the church. Voltaire knew very well, that the nation was prepared for a successful assault on the prevailing religion. The people had long been accustomed to get all their ideas of the gospel from those who perverted it, in almost every particular. We cannot excuse the men of genius and learning, who having begun the attack upon the abominations of the Papacy, went so far as to aim at the entire fabric of Christianity. But these very men had themselves been led astray by blind leaders of the blind, and deeply wronged in their moral nature: — and now, having once engaged in the work of opposition to what had been for ages a stupendous usurpation, they were naturally conducted into the excess of outrage which they committed against the sacred cause of truth and human happiness. But such men can never, under any circumstances, employ their pens against the only hope of our race, — the gospel of Christ, — without aggravated guilt.

Crime could go no farther. Punishment was the next thing written in the book of divine decrees. Men were cut adrift upon a tumultuous ocean. They become the tormentors of each other. Treachery and blood abound. Society is turned up from its deep foundations. The guillotine is employed upon the royal family because it is royal, and upon the plebeian because he is French.

No description will here be attempted of the divine judgments manifested in the French revolution. They are known, perhaps, as thoroughly and generally as any event that history records. We have seen that they were brought on by the great wickedness of France, in her abuse of the light of the gospel. We have only further to remark, that, through these judgments, God is making himself known as the God of creation, of providence, and of revelation.

The very earth has been made, through this revolution, to speak forth the wonders of the Godhead. On the spot where men chose to deny his existence, has Jehovah dis-

Digitized by Google

played the terrors of his majesty, to such a degree as to rivet the attention of the world. In his providential dealings with France, he has shewn the connection between impiety and national ruin, more distinctly and impressively, perhaps, than in any preceding event. And as the pure Word of God was cast out as fabulous, by the body of the people, the terrific consequences of so doing have appeared amidst the scenes of the revolution, with such prominence as to crown that Word with honor in the view of the nations. This lesson has been taught to the world on a gigantic scale. The pulpit from which the great sermon was read, has been in sight of all the tribes, and kindreds, and tongues, of the earth. The voice which read it has been loud enough to resound over all the globe. Every sea has heard it. The Lord is known everywhere by the judgments which he has inflicted upon guilty France. Other nations that were too well disposed to walk after the same example of impiety, have been kept back from the brink of the precipice by beholding the judicial sufferings of France.

The consequences of those crimes which have led already to such fearful calamities, are still working their way through the doubtful history of recent changes. All who revere the Word of God, are fully aware of the difficulty as to the establishment of good government, and the prevalence of peace and prosperity, in that land. They have no confidence in any attempts that can be made to secure the blessings of liberty, so long as the Sabbath is trodden under foot. Religion cannot prosper without her day of rest and worship; and without the prosperity of religion, morality cannot be secured, nor those sober and rational views of liberty which are far removed from all licentiousness. There is little hazard in saying, that the world has never before experienced so widespread a conviction of the necessity of pure and undefiled religion to form the basis of national prosperity, as now prevails, chiefly on account of the terrible things in righteousness which God has brought upon infidel Europe within the last sixty years. We cannot doubt that this conviction is to be yet more widely spread, by the events that are taking place in such rapid and alarming succession.

Digitized by Google

CONSERVATISM.

We use the word *conservatism*, not in the technical sense of political parties, but in a broad sense, which indicates a healthy antagonism to all the radical and destructive elements which are now assailing the whole frame of society. Modern history teaches, that Calvinism has been the fostering nurse of civil liberty,—as in Switzerland, Holland, Scotland, England, and America; and that it has held the leading agency in all the chief developments of such liberty, in the last three centuries. The history of our own time makes it plain, that the same system of Christian doctrine is equally the antagonist of rash and fanatical attempts at reform.

It is the natural working of the orthodox scheme of moral theology, to create a repugnance to all human and corporate tyranny, and an equal abhorrence of lawless and tumultuary changes. He who lives in the belief of the sublime doctrine of God's eternal decrees whereby the world is governed, will scorn to be subject to the decrees of man, and will firmly insist on the predominance of the law of right, and on a settled order of things. As the ages subsequent to the Reformation witnessed the stern resistance of such minds to antiquated abuses and hoary despotisms,—so the present age sees the same class of minds arrayed inflexibly against all anti-social and malignant innovations, and all unprincipled and infidel disorganizers.

Let us recur to a few examples of this instinctive and intelligent conservatism. One prominent form of radicalism, during the last ten or fifteen years, has been seen in the crusade against the death-penalty, and virtually against all penalties not strictly reformatory. Now it is well known, that decided Calvinists, almost to a man, have frowned upon this movement, because it proceeds on principles adverse to those of the moral government of God. At the same time, it has been mostly countenanced by Unitarians, Universalists, and opposers of all forms of Christianity. Indeed, these latter classes had started and widely disseminated their principles on this subject, before the open crusade against capital

Digitized by Google

punishment had begun. Dr. Channing, in his election sermon, preached in 1830, undertook to indoctrinate our legislature on this point. Urging the duty of punishing only for the reformation of the offender, he argues thus: "You say, We must punish for example. But history shews, that what is called exemplary punishment cannot boast of great efficiency. Crime thrives under severe penalties,—thrives on the blood of offenders."

It is a cardinal principle of Unitarianism and Universalism, that, under the government of God, there are no punishments for example's sake; — that all punishments are designed merely for the reformation of the offender, and not at all that others "may hear and fear." And if it be so under the perfect government of God, it is a natural inference, that it should be so in civil government, which is itself an ordinance of God. Thus the recent efforts to exclude from our penal code all exemplary punishments, are directly traced to Unitarianism, and its kindred influences. These efforts are also directly opposed to a fair reading of the New Testament, as well as to the orthodox system, which is strictly drawn from the benevolent and righteous teachings of the Son of God.

The like may be said of certain crudities in the theory and practice of education, which have, of late, raised some disturbance. We allude to the exclusion of all corporal correction from the discipline of schools and families. This notion, for a time, found prodigious favor; and, in the hands of the Transcendentalists, had not a few comic illustrations. Yet it is but a limber twig from that root which produces the doctrine, that all punishment must aim at the reformation of the transgressor alone; — while, with absurd incoherence, it denies that punishment has any reforming power. This novel notion originates in the Unitarian view of human nature. It is not admitted, in that quarter, that man is naturally depraved, or that "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child," and that "the rod of correction will drive it far from him." It is held by the would-be reformers of school and family government, that goodness is the spontaneous product of the human heart; and that the child, if only set free from outward restraints, will develop this native virtue.

Digitized by Google

To the same anti-evangelical source, we may track the extravagant sentiments of the non-resistants, which have done so much to impede the sacred cause of emancipation; and also the fierce ultraism, which has done so much to retard the Temperance movement. The Temperance enterprize was begun, and, in its early stages, was mainly pushed forward, by Calvinistic ministers. But, in its later stages, it assumed a different character; and our ministers found themselves obliged to stand aloof from the extravagancies engrafted on the good stock by men of another spirit. The history of this business well illustrates each of the moral tendencies of Calvinism,— its tendency to generate needed reforms,— and its tendency to resist fanatical and irreligious measures in the prosecution of reforms.

The same remarks might be made about the Socialism, which, for several years, struggled for birth among us. The Roxbury Phalanx had for its head and soul, a distinguished Unitarian minister, once a popular pastor in Boston. Another phalanx in this State had for its leader a noted Restorationist, not very perceptibly differing from the Unitarians. And the chief priest of Socialism in this country, — the editor of the New York Tribune, — has made transcendental Unitarianism even more prominent in his paper than Socialism. But we believe the man is yet to be found, who is at once a decided Calvinist, and an avowed Socialist.

Our position has its most comprehensive illustration in the followers of Mr. Garrison,— a general name for the aggregate of all the maddest forms of radicalism. With what class of religionists is this frantic faction in the nearest sympathy and agreement? It is notorious, that, so far as they express any religious sentiments, they are either Unitarians or Pantheists; and the difference between these is more in name, than in substance. Coleridge has said, with his usual penetration and power: "I hold it demonstrable, that a consistent Socinianism, following its own consequences, must come to Pantheism; and, in ungodding the Saviour, must deify cats and dogs, fleas and frogs." * On the principle of

* Literary Remains of S. T. Coleridge, Vol. IV. P. 224.

Digitized by Google

elective affinity, there is nothing strange in the amalgamation of all sorts of anti-evangelical theorists in the noisy Garrisonian camp. This is equally true of the anti-christians and "come-outers," who have fallen away to them from the ranks of orthodoxy. "They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." The best illustration of the moral stand-point of Calvinism is to be seen in the temper of this band of bitter factionists. If we may judge by their own expressions, no denominations are so honored by their malevolent opposition, as those which are most distinctively Calvinistic.

This, then is the glory of Calvinism, that it not only originated the civil and social liberty of this country, but that it stands as the main defence of the public mind against the fanaticisms by which that liberty would otherwise be corrupted and destroyed.

REV. BENJAMIN WOOD, AS A PREACHER.*

Rev. Benjamin Wood, of Upton, was an uncommonly interesting and successful preacher of the gospel. Even in old age, he continued to bring forth the fruits of an able ministry. Though he was permitted to minister to the same people for fifty-three years, the last sermon he ever preached to them, awakened, perhaps, as much interest as any that he preached during his long ministry. Even to the close of his life, the people of his charge, were quite as well pleased to see him in the pulpit, as any substitute he could furnish. And no one was greeted with a more general and cordial welcome than he, by the churches and congregations through all the region where he was so long and so well known.

* This sketch is here inserted with much pleasure, in accordance with the request of the Harmony Association, by one of whose esteemed brethren it was prepared.

Digitized by Google

There was a certain charm about his preaching, which drew many to hear him, who had no sympathy with the truths he uttered. A brief analysis of his character as a preacher, it is thought, may be profitable. What were the elements of his power in the pulpit? What rendered him so acceptable and successful, as a minister of the New Testament?

The answer to the inquiry here proposed, involves a consideration of the *matter*, and the *manner*, of his preaching. The matter of his preaching was evangelical. And though it was less peculiar than his manner, yet it had a very definite character. He preached the gospel of Christ,—the gospel which is adapted to the necessities of fallen man; and not another gospel, having no Saviour, and but little of his truth in it. His sermons were not learned and polished disquisitions on science or the arts, or literature or philosophy, nor were they tame moral essays; but they were clear and forcible vindications of the character and ways of God, clear exhibitions of the plan of redemption by the cross of Christ, and solemn appeals to sinful dying men to be reconciled to God. They did not abound so much in the flowers of rhetoric, as in the fruits of the tree of life.

The peculiarities of his theology were those that characterize the system of Dr. Emmons,—that master in Israel, at whose feet he, with so many other able ministers of Christ, was brought up. He ever delighted to hear, and to tell others, about "the great and dreadful God,"—the "great King above all gods." It was the joy of his heart that "the Lord reigns, working all things after the counsel of his own will." He felt and taught, that none but God could fill the throne, and direct the affairs of the universe; and that though "clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." He presented those views of the character and condition of man which are clearly revealed in the Bible, representing him as a lost sinner, totally depraved, condemned already, and entirely dependent upon the sovereign grace of God for salvation.

And he preached Christ crucified, as the only Saviour of the lost,—the all-sufficient Saviour of the chief of sinners. Like Paul before Agrippa, he *reasoned* with his fellow-men of

Digitized by Google

righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. Knowing the terror of the Lord, he persuaded men to bow without delay at the foot of the cross, and to make Christ their refuge from the wrath to come. With a deep conviction of the exceeding worth and danger of the soul, he watched for souls, as one that must give account. To him, as to those who listened to him with attention when he was preaching, the judgment-seat of Christ seemed like a solemn reality. By the prospect of it, he was moved, and sought to move others. The subject-matter of his preaching, was "the truth, as it is in Jesus;" and by manifestation of the truth, he commended himself to the consciences of men in the sight of God.

He not only preached the truth, but he *studied* to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He was a very discriminating preacher. He meditated deeply on the themes of his discourses, and gave himself wholly to them, so that his profiting appeared to all who heard him. His habits of study were maintained to the last. Those who were members of the same Association with him can bear witness, that some of the richest and most labored productions of his pen, were prepared when he was borne down by the infirmities of age, and the grave was well-nigh ready for him. His mind was thus saved from becoming rusty, and his thoughts had a freshness and vigor well adapted to awaken interest in those to whom they were presented. He was not accustomed to carry into the pulpit an ancient manuscript, whose contents could be decyphered only by a process, laborious and tedious both to himself and his hearers; but a discourse fresh from the mint of thought and feeling, and between it and his own soul there was a warm and living sympathy.

In Mr. Wood's *manner* of preaching, there was also much that was well-fitted to excite the interest, and fix the attention, of an audience. His style was chaste and simple. His sentences were short and full of meaning, and their meaning was very plain to all who gave suitable attention. His sermons were constructed after the model of his revered instructor in theology. He usually preached both parts of the day from a single text; giving in the morning the body of the

Digitized by Google

sermon, or explaining and establishing the truth contained in the text, and occupying the afternoon with inferences. He used to say, that if ever he did any good to his fellow-men, as a preacher, it was chiefly by his inferences. And those who have heard him, are ready to admit the correctness of his own impression in reference to this thing. Not that there was any deficiency in the body of the sermon. Had that been the case, the inferences must have been weak and powerless. For inferences require something to sustain them. They cannot be drawn with any force, without something from which to draw them. The stream cannot rise higher than the fountain whence it issues, and his streams of inference always flowed from a full and living fountain. They arose naturally from the subject, were pertinent to the condition of the hearer, and expressed with a directness and force of language well fitted to accomplish the end of preaching,—the conviction and salvation of the soul. Those inferences were the arrows of truth which were made sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, whereby many were brought to bow in humble submission at his feet.

Another element of power in the manner of Mr. Wood, was a voice, clear, rich, and musical in its tones. His voice was naturally good. And he knew how to play skilfully on that charming instrument,—the human voice. He was a man of very tender sensibility. He acted easily and naturally in conformity with that rhetorical maxim expressed by the Latin poet, "If you would make others weep, you must first weep yourself." He was wont to evince a kind and degree of emotion which corresponded well with the solemn truth to which he was giving utterance, and shewed that he felt the force of those motives by which he labored to persuade others. His lively emotion was expressed in his eye, in his countenance, in his gesture, but most especially in the tones of his voice. Garrick said, that Whitefield could make his hearers weep or tremble by his varied utterance of the "sweet word, *Mesopotamia!*" An intelligent gentleman says, that he and many others in the congregation were, on one occasion, melted to tears, by Mr. Wood's peculiar manner of uttering the words of his text. The text was in the

Digitized by Google

fifth chapter of the gospel of Luke: "And Simon, answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word, I will let down the net." These words were uttered in tones so tender and subduing, as to bring many to tears.

Mr. Wood's manner was earnest and affectionate. He did not mistake harshness for earnestness. His manner of announcing the threatenings of God was not "that harsh and unfeeling manner," which Robert Hall pronounces "not only barbarous and inhuman, but calculated, by inspiring disgust, to rob those threatenings of their efficiency." The awful part of his message, which may be styled the "burden of the Lord," was wont to fall with impressive weight upon his hearers, because "delivered with a trembling hand and faltering lips." The look, the tone, the action, when such subjects were discussed, were not such as tend only to excite horror and revulsion, but a mixture of solemnity and affection, — the awfulness of love. "Real earnestness," says Rev. J. A. James, "is the result of deep emotion; and the emotion excited by the sight of a fellow-creature perishing in his sins, is that of the tenderest commiseration, which will express itself, not in stormy declamation and thundering denunciations, but in tones of solemnly chastened expostulation and appeal."

Another characteristic of Rev. Mr. Wood, was the power of adapting himself to times and seasons, and to the peculiar circumstances of a congregation. As the musician knows what key to touch if he would bring forth a given sound, so he seemed to have an unusually quick and clear perception of what was needed to produce a certain impression at a certain time; and he was wont to say the right thing, at the right time, and in the right way,— to speak a word in season. Many have felt the effect of a few sentences from his lips in waking up the "drowsy powers," in rousing the "sluggish soul," and suddenly reviving the flagging interest of the conference meeting. Moreover he always stopped when he had done. He never taxed the patience of an audience, to hear him when he had nothing to say. Tediousness was something of which his hearers never had occasion to complain.

Digitized by Google

Such, is a brief and imperfect exhibition of Rev. Mr. Wood, as a preacher. Would that there were more like him!

When he finished his long and useful ministry, and devout men from all the region around, assembled to carry him to his burial, and make lamentation over him, each of his younger brethren in the ministry felt that he would gladly catch the mantle, in which that esteemed father was arrayed in the pulpit, when he came to deliver God's messages of wrath and mercy to dying men. And could they each be clothed with his distinguishing excellencies as a preacher, their ministry would prove a rich blessing to the world, and could be reviewed from its close with rich satisfaction. And when they should rest from their labors with the blessed dead, their works would be with them in heaven, and following them thither in long succession.

MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH.

In the rural grave-yards of New England, few lines are oftener repeated on the head-stones, than those which assure the passing reader, that

> "The sweet remembrance of the just
> Shall flourish, when they sleep in dust."

It is healthful, as well as pleasant, to inhale these fragrant memories; and to breathe in that vital air of goodness, which embalms with the "odors of sanctity" the names of the pious dead. Having lately had occasion to exhume, from the accumulated dust of oblivion, all that remains of the virtues of one of the most holy and exemplary of the Puritan pastors of the first and best age of New England, the writer cannot resist the impulse to exhibit these recovered relics to as many eyes as may glance at these pages.*

* Most of the original documents used in preparing this sketch were furnished by the liberality of Charles Ewer, Esq., late president of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society.

Digitized by Google

Michael Wigglesworth was born in England, October 28th, 1631. In a sketch of his early life and religious experience, prepared by himself, apparently for use at his ordination, he says: "I was born of godly parents that feared the Lord greatly, even from their youth; but in an ungodly place, where the generality of the people rather derided, than imitated, their piety." It was natural that this worthy pair should seek for some more congenial abode. "These godly parents of mine," says their son, "meeting with opposition and persecution for religion, because they went from their own parish church to hear the word and receive the Lord's Supper, took up resolutions to pluck up their stakes, and remove themselves to New England. And accordingly they did so, leaving dear relations, friends, and acquaintances, their native land, a new-built house, and a flourishing trade, to expose themselves to the hazard of the seas, and to the distressing difficulties of a howling wilderness, that they might enjoy liberty of conscience, and Christ in his ordinances."

After many difficulties and dangers, they landed at Charlestown, the lad Michael not being then quite seven years old. In a few weeks, the family embarked again, for Quinipiac, now New Haven, in October, 1638. On their passage they encountered a storm, which drove them ashore upon a sandy beach, till the next flood tide took them off, and they reached their port in safety. This was a very different business from going to New Haven by railroad! "Winter approaching," says our authority, "we dwelt in a cellar partly under-ground, covered with earth, the first winter. But I remember that one great rain broke in upon us, and drenched me so in my bed, being asleep, that I fell sick upon it; but the Lord, in mercy, spared my life and restored my health." It may be surmised, however, that these rough exposures had something to do with enfeebling his constitution, and bringing on the weaknesses which so long depressed his later life.

The next summer he was sent to school to that famous pedagogue, Ezekiel Cheever; under whom, in a year or two, he had already begun the composition of Latin, when his father was seized with a lameness which grew upon him till he died, thirteen years afterward. The boy being taken off from his

Digitized by Google

studies to aid his parent, soon lost what he had acquired. But on entering his fourteenth year, he was sent back to school; and in two years and three quarters, was judged fit to enter Harvard College. He graduated in 1651, and was soon appointed a fellow and tutor. In the document above cited, he pays the following grateful tribute to his parent: "It was an act of great self-denial in my father, that, notwithstanding his own lameness and great weakness of body, which required the service and helpfulness of a son, and having but one son to be the staff of his age and supporter of his weakness, he would yet for my good be content to deny himself of that comfort and assistance, I might have lent him. It was also an evident proof of a strong faith in him, in that he durst adventure to send me to the College, though his estate was but small, and little enough to maintain himself and small family left at home. And God let him live to see how acceptable to himself this service was, in giving up his only son to the Lord, and bringing him up to learning, especially the lively actings of his faith and self-denial herein. For first, notwithstanding his great weakness of body, yet he lived till I was so far brought up as that I was called to be a Fellow of the College, and improved in public service there, and until I had preached several times; yea, and more than so, he lived to see and hear what God had done for my soul in turning me from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, which filled his heart full of joy and thankfulness beyond what can be expressed. And for his outward estate, that was so far from being sunk by what he spent from year to year upon my education, that in six years' time it was plainly doubled; which himself took great notice of, and spake of it to myself and others, to the praise of God, with admiration and thankfulness. After he had lived under great and sore affliction for the space of thirteen years, a pattern of faith, patience, humility, and heavenly-mindedness, having done his work in my education, and received an answer to his prayers, God took him to his heavenly rest, where he is now reaping the fruit of his labors."

Having been strictly and religiously trained, Michael Wigglesworth was kept, before and during his College course,

Digitized by Google

from all scandalous sins; but, being actuated, as he says, "by corrupt nature, he could propound no right and noble ends to himself; but acted *from* self and *for* self." He was indeed studious, and strove to outdo his compeers; "but it was for honor, and applause, and preferment, and such poor beggarly ends." "But," he says, "when I had been in College about three years and a half, God, in his love and pity to my soul, wrought a great change in me, both in heart and life, and from that time forward, I learned to study with God, and for God. And whereas, before that, I had thoughts of applying myself to the study and practice of physic, I wholly laid aside those thoughts, and did choose to serve Christ in the work of the ministry, if he would please to fit me for it, and to accept of my service in that great work."

That he was much troubled in regard to health, while residing at Cambridge, is evident from the following passage in his diary while tutor there: "In our President's exposition, I found sweet encouragement, in regard to my bodily weakness, occasionally fetched from that, Isaiah xl. 30, 31," "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles," etc. Upon these words, President Dunster, making, as it seems, his daily exposition in the College hall, uttered the apposite remark: "It may be thou art sickly. Why, the Lord is thy physician, who healeth thee. He can make thee strong in thy age, though thou be weakly in thy youth." This assertion was made good, in a remarkable degree, to Mr. Wigglesworth; who afforded full proof, at last, that God is able to uphold the "bruised reed," and make it one of the firmest pillars in his eternal temple.

Dr. Increase Mather, who was one of his *pupils*, thus speaks of him as Fellow and Tutor: "With a rare faithfulness did he adorn the station! He used all the means imaginable, to make his pupils not only good scholars, but also good Christians, and instill into them those things which might render them rich blessings unto the churches of God. Unto his watchful and painful essays to keep them close unto their academical exercises, he added serious admonitions unto

Digitized by Google

them about their interior state; and, (as I find in his reserved papers,) he employed his prayers and tears to God for them, and had such a flaming zeal to make them worthy men, that, upon reflection, he was afraid lest his 'cares for their good, and his affection to them, should so drink up his very spirit, as to steal away his heart from God.'" Oh, when will that seat of science, dedicated "to Christ and the church," by the pious zeal of its orthodox founders, again be blessed with teachers and guardians of such a spirit!

President Dunster had a sister, the wife of Mr. Joseph Hills of Malden, a lawyer of note, and one of the Governor's Assistants. It was probably by means of this connection, that Mr. Wigglesworth, in 1654, some six years after the incorporation of Malden, was settled there as successor to Marmaduke Mathews, in the pastoral office. His ministry was sadly broken in upon by "long-continued and increasing bodily infirmities;" but the spirit of it may be understood by a few extracts from his Sabbath memoranda.

"March 21, 1658. Oh how vehemently do I desire to serve God, and not myself, in the conversion of souls this day. My soul longs after thy house and work, O God!"

"January 9, 1659. My soul panteth after thee, O God! After more of thy favor, more of thine image. O satisfy me with the fatness of thy house, make me to drink of the rivers of thy joys, so that for the outward pressures I may have inward supportings and consolations. I long to serve thee, O Christ! help thou me!"

"February 6. My soul, be cheerful in thy work; thou servest a good Master."

"June 5. Now, in the strength of Christ, I desire to seek him, and the advancement of God's glory, in the salvation of souls this day. Oh that I might see the fruit of my labors before I die! Oh my soul! perform this labor as thy last!"

"September 25.

> My sins and wants still sorely pain my heart;
> My hope in Christ relieves my smart,
> And in his day and work, I do delight."

These extracts, now printed for the first time, may serve to shew his eminent spirituality of mind, and his heavenly

Digitized by Google

zeal. Finding himself much disabled from ministerial duty, he sought to transfer his usefulness from the pulpit to the pen. His famous poem, "The Day of Doom," was first published in 1662. An edition of nearly two thousand copies was sold within a year. Increase Mather says, that it "has been often reprinted in both Englands, and may perhaps find our children till the day itself arrive." In the preface to the second edition of this book, printed in 1666, the author intimates that his habitual cheerfulness occasioned many to suspect that his complaints were wholly imaginary. It has, of late, received some new celebrity, as being the only known publication originating in this country, which teaches the dismal dogma of infant damnation.

When Dr. Lyman Beecher, twenty years ago, waged his famous controversy with the Christian Examiner on this subject, this poem was the only distinct proof that could be produced by the Unitarians, that any Calvinist among us had ever held such a doctrine. Accordingly an old copy of this forgotten book was hunted up, and republished in a large edition, and portions of it have since been almost annually reprinted in certain anti-evangelical journals. According to the plan of the poem, various classes of sinners are arraigned at the judgment-seat, and their respective pleas are confuted by the Judge, before their doom is pronounced. Among the rest, the souls of such as departed from this world in infancy are summoned to the bar. They make a very sensible plea in their own behalf; but the Judge answers them with such massive and conclusive logic, that the little ones give up their case with a meekness that is quite affecting. The inexorable justice, "which seems to pity what it could not spare," assigns them the most tolerable place in the abodes of sorrow!

Mr. Wigglesworth also gave to the public, in 1669, a poem on the sanctification of afflictions, of which he had large experience. Of this book, we have a copy of the fifth edition, "corrected and amended by the Author, in the year 1703," not long before his death. Considering the small population of these Colonies at that time, these frequent reprints are a remarkable proof of popularity. It is said, that very many

Digitized by Google

of the old saints of past generations could recite the whole from memory. Of this later work, the first part is entitled, "Meat out of the Eater: or Meditations concerning the Necessity, End, and Usefulness of Afflictions unto God's Children; All tending to Prepare them *For*, and Comfort them *Under*, the Cross." The first title alludes to Samson's riddle; and truly, affliction, which had devoured so many of the good man's dearest joys, was made to disgorge far richer treasures than it took away. The second and larger part of this book is entitled, "Riddles Unriddled: or Christian Paradoxes broke open, smelling like sweet spice new taken out of boxes.

"Each Paradox is like a Box
That Cordials rare encloseth;
This Key unlocks, op'neth the Box,
And what's within discloseth;
That whoso will may take his fill,
And gain where no man loseth."

As the first part of the book treated of afflictions in general, so this part dwells more upon particular trials and temptations. The several paradoxes expounded at length, in divers extensive "songs" and "meditations," are comprised in the following lines, which form the *thema* to which he tuned his harp:

"*Light in Darkness, Sick men's Health,*
Strength in Weakness, Poor men's Wealth,
In Confinement, Liberty,
In Solitude, Good Company,
Joy in Sorrow, Life in Deaths,
Heavenly Crowns for Thorny Wreaths,
Are presented to thy view
In the Poems that ensue.
If my Trials had been thine,
These would cheer thee more than Wine."

In these rugged metres, which breathe far more of the spirit of piety than of the soul of poesy, the good man exercised that "dispensation of the grace of God which was given him; whereby, when we read, we may understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ." The composition of these poems, as appears by many entries in his private note-

Digitized by Google

books, was very laborious to him in the enfeebled state of his system; but he was stimulated to his task by the intense desire of usefulness to the souls of men.

About nine years after his ordination, he was obliged to withdraw from the duties of the pulpit, though without demitting his pastoral office. In the fall of 1663, he sailed, for the benefit of his health, to Bermuda. But the storms which raged around the "still vext Bermoothes," seem to have impaired his shattered constitution so much, that he received but little benefit by his eight months sojourn among the "tropic isles." On his return, he met with a most cordial reception from his friends and his flock. Being now unable to exercise his ministry, through the severity of his complaint, which was probably the asthma, he betook himself to the study and practice of medicine; and "God made him a successful physician, and a *beloved* one."

During some twenty-three years, he was aided by colleagues, of whom he had three in succession. At last, in 1686, "It pleased God, when the distresses of the Church in Malden did extremely call for it, wondrously to restore his faithful servant." For twenty years he labored diligently in word and doctrine. About a year after the resumption of his ministry, he preached the Election Sermon; and he preached the Artillery Election Sermon, in 1696. Judge Sewall, who was present on the former occasion, records in his diary, that Mr. Wigglesworth alluded, in his prayer, to his long seclusion, and acknowledged the goodness of God, "in bringing him forth, who had been reckoned among the dead," to preach the word of life.

"He earnestly desired," says Dr. Mather, "that he might hold out useful unto the last. God granted him his desire; a desire seldom denied unto them that are so importunate in it. It was a surprise unto us, to see a little feeble shadow of a man, beyond seventy, preaching usually twice or thrice in a week; visiting and comforting the afflicted; encouraging the private meetings; catechising the children of the flock; managing the government of the church; and attending the sick, not only as a pastor, but as a physician, too; and this not only in his own town, but also in all those of the vicinity.

Digitized by Google

Thus he did unto the last; and he was only one Lord's day taken off, before his last." He made a godly and edifying end, full of assurance and peace. In reply to a remark as to his interest in Christ, he said: "I bless God, I began that work betimes; and ere I was twenty years old, I had made thorough work of it. Ever since then, I have been pressing after the power of godliness,—the power of godliness! For more than fifty years together, I have been laboring to uphold a life of communion with God; and I thank the Lord, I now find the comfort of it!"

His name is still held in great veneration at Malden, where a reprint of Dr. Increase Mather's admirable sermon at his funeral, has lately been gratuitously distributed to each family in the town. His time-worn monumental stone, still legibly bears the following inscription: "Memento Mori: Fugit Hora. Here lies buried the body of that faithful servant of Jesus Christ, the Rev. Mr. Michael Wigglesworth, Pastor of the Church of Christ, at Malden,—who finished his work, and entered upon an eternal Sabbath of rest, on the Lord's day, June the 10th, 1705, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

> Here lies interred, in silent grave below,
> Malden's Physician of soul and body too."

His two sons were eminent ministers of the gospel. Samuel, was minister, and like his father, physician, in the Hamlet parish of Ipswich, now Hamilton; where he died in 1768, in the fifty-fourth year of his ministry, and the eightieth of his age. The other son, Edward Wigglesworth, D. D., was the first Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard College, a post he occupied with honor for more than forty years, and in which he was succeeded by his son Edward, also a Doctor in Divinity. Thus the blessings of the covenant long abode in the family of the son of the pious New Haven emigrant. It is good to dwell among the memories of departed worth, and to catch

> "The freights of holy feeling which we meet
> In fields where good men walked,
> Or bowers where they dwelt."

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, together with the Thirteenth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board. Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, State Printers. 1850.

THE MASSACHUSETTS SYSTEM OF COMMON SCHOOLS; being an Enlarged and Revised Edition of the Tenth Annual Report of the First Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, State Printers. 1850.

IT may well be doubted, whether any of our State documents can claim higher importance, than these annual exhibitions of the condition and working of our educational system, together with the valuable statistics which attend them. We hope, at last, to see the day, when one of them will appear, divested of all objectionable matter, and free from manifestations of official *pique*, and self-glorification.

It is obvious from the constitution of the Board, and the statutory limitations of its power, that its action is chiefly confined to the appointment of certain functionaries, through whom the influence of the Board is mostly felt. It is to be regretted, that, in its past years, some of its appointments have excited extensive discontent and disgust. So strong has been this feeling, as greatly to impede the usefulness of its establishments, and even to endanger the existence of the Board itself. We verily believe, that if certain changes extorted by public sentiment, had not been made, that honorable and reverend body would have expired by legislative decree, on entering its "teens." As it is, the Board, like a mother doating on some misshapen pet, cannot part with one of its lovely frights, without an extravagance of grief which is ludicrous in the extreme. The late principal of the West Newton Normal School, who was their evil genius, and whose follies exposed them to incessant blame and contempt, is given up by them, in this Report to the Legislature, in a most pathetic parting scene. The absurd old man, who had long brooded like an incubus upon the prosperity of that school, and had blasted it with an almost anti-christian reputation, as being a hot-bed of pantheistic impiety, is extolled by them as perhaps the only man capable of conducting successfully the experiment of what he used to call *normalty*.

Digitized by Google

And this, too, in face of the fact stated by the Board itself, that almost as soon as there was a change in the direction of the school, the number of its scholars increased fifty per cent. The increase would probably be much greater, but for the limited accommodations.

But leaving this and other instances of official infatuation, we would turn to matters more honorable to all concerned. It appears, in general, that the interests of education are much prospered among us at this time, being enthusiastically fostered by public and private munificence. More than four dollars per head is appropriated, taking the Commonwealth throughout, for the tuition of each child between the ages of four and sixteen years; and this money is expended under a plan of active and vigilant supervision, so extensive and minute, as to be a matter of astonishment to all who look into its workings.

In the Annual Report of the excellent and accomplished Dr. Sears, the present Secretary of the Board, we have an admirable and business-like document. He comes to the point, without rhetorical flourishes and transcendental rhapsodies. We greatly like this change in the tenor of these reports, regarding it as indicative of the change in the duties of the Secretary, which was made on the accession of the present incumbent of that responsible office. It had been the proper calling of his "illustrious predecessor," to make grand demonstrations, oratorical appeals, flights of fancy, bursts of eloquence, and electrifying explosions of imagination; — and all by way of rousing up the drowsy intelligence of the slumbering people. But now that he has thoroughly stirred up their nervous excitability, the task of directing their awakened zeal to some good practical purpose, is devolved upon his worthy successor. All that could be done say the Board by "written discussion upon the great questions, theoretical and practical, connected with education," had been effected by the first Secretary "in so masterly a manner, that little seemed to be left to be done by a new laborer in the same field." On this point, we are obliged to differ from them. We think that much that Mr. Mann has done needs to be done over again, and much better than it was

Digitized by Google

done by him; and we think that his attempts at discussion are very far from rounding out the full circle of instruction which is needed in this department. Still it is time, that the efforts of the chief officer of the Board should be chiefly directed "to the practical application of our Common School System in its details." The people, by this time, are ready for more work, and less talk.

The principal topic treated in Dr. Sears's Report is the great injury resulting from the practice of many of our towns under the existing laws, of consigning the selection of teachers to the prudential committee-men of the several school-districts, rather than to the general superintending Committee chosen by and for the whole town. It is to be hoped that his forcible statements and reasonings may lead to a speedy change in this particular. The copious abstracts which he offers from the town-reports of many of the school-committees bear upon this point.

By the School Returns made last year to the Secretary's office, it appears, that, in the fourteen counties, and three hundred and fifteen towns of Massachusetts, with a population of 737,700, and a valuation of three hundred millions of dollars, there were last year, 3,749 free schools. The total attendance in these schools was above 180,000, and the average attendance was 135,000; while the whole number of persons between four and sixteen years of age was 216,000. The number of male teachers employed was 2,426, with an average pay of thirty-four dollars per month. The whole number of female teachers was 5,737, with an average pay of fourteen dollars per month, while their expenses were about two-thirds of those of the male teachers. The whole amount expended upon the free schools was $871,000. Of incorporated and private schools, there were 1,111, numbering 31,500 pupils, for whose tuition $240,000 was paid. If to these could be added the numbers and expenses of students in schools for particular branches of study, and in our colleges, and professional schools, we should have the sum total of the last year's bill for education in the old Bay State.

Much the most generous appropriations for school purposes, were made in the enlightened and wealthy city of Boston;

Digitized by Google

while the little town of Boxborough, in the county of Middlesex, stands at the top of the list, as the banner-town, in respect to the average attendance on the schools, the number in actual attendance in that town, very much exceeding the number of its population between the ages of four and sixteen. All honor to that miniature municipality, which proves so admirably that "small bodies are the most active."

Simultaneously with this Thirteenth Report, appears an enlarged and revised edition of Mr. Mann's Tenth Report, in pursuance of resolves of the last Legislature, appointing that honorable gentleman "to prepare for republication, so much of his Tenth Annual Report as, with the requisite additions and alterations, to be also made by him, will exhibit a just and correct view of the Common School System of Massachusetts, and the provisions of law relating to it." Of this edition, ten thousand copies were ordered to be printed; and large as this number seems, we learn that it is barely adequate to satisfy the required distribution. This is by far the best and most useful of all the reports which have issued from the prolific and flowery pen of its author. Most of his reports possessed but little permanent value, being merely high-wrought declamations, abounding in extravagant assertions, and propositions of reckless changes. Some of them involved him in controversies unexceeded for personal acrimony and invective; and, though a master in the use of those weapons, he often found himself foiled and overpowered. If his adversaries were exceedingly severe upon him, they were not without excuse; for, as Thomas Fuller says, "none will blame a man for arming his hands with hard and rough gloves, who is to meddle with briars and brambles."

Cancelling some forty-five pages of his original Report, relating to things of inferior moment, Mr. Mann has substituted five or six pages of introductory matter, pertaining to the early history of our system; and eulogizing our Puritan forefathers, who, in regard to a truly liberal education, planned, purposed, and provided for far nobler results, than we, with all our boasting, have yet secured. "The contrast," he says, "between our ancestors and ourselves, in this respect,

Digitized by Google

is most humiliating. Their meanness in wealth was more than compensated by their grandeur of soul."

The ex-Secretary then enters into an extended argument to prove, that it is the duty of the State to provide, at the public charge, for the thorough education of all its children. He comes deliberately to the bold result, that "every State is morally bound to enact a code of laws legalizing and enforcing infanticide, or a code of laws establishing free schools." This reminds of a toast given by Charles Lamb at a dinner-table, where he was excessively annoyed by the misconduct of the young ones; and where the old bachelor horrified the fond and inefficient mother, by exclaiming: "I propose the health of that most excellent, but shamefully calumniated, King Herod!" If we had been wicked enough to imitate the cruel Jewish despot, in neglecting to establish free schools, it would hardly follow that we would have been "morally bound" to follow him in the other crime of slaughtering the innocents. We have been told, that "rhetoric is logic set on fire;" but, in this case, the logic is burnt to ashes.

Mr. Mann presents the three following propositions, as "the broad and ever-during foundation" of our Common School System: "The successive generations of men, taken collectively, constitute one great commonwealth. — The property of this commonwealth is pledged for the education of all its youth, up to such a point as will save them from poverty and vice, and prepare them for the adequate performance of their social and civil duties. — The successive holders of this property are trustees, bound to the faithful execution of their trust by the most sacred obligations; and embezzlement and pillage from children and descendants have not less of criminality, and have more of meanness, than the same offences when perpetrated against contemporaries."

We do not stop to consider, Whether it is correct to represent the State as merely a great educational institution? But if the second of these propositions is strictly true, then education is omnipotent to prevent "poverty and vice,"—and the pledge made to our youth has been shamefully violated, and the public trust in their behalf has been foully betrayed.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Mann next proceeds to fill up the body of his Report, with "an account of existing legal enactments for the organization and administration of the Massachusetts School System." This takes up a hundred and fifteen pages, and is apparently executed with great care and accuracy. It may well be regarded, though a work of labor rather than of genius, as the most valuable of all the compiler's productions. Probably gentlemen learned in the law may criticize some of his representations; but, doubtless, this is the most convenient exhibition of the whole code of our legislation on this subject, and it must be invaluable to all our School-committees and teachers, as well as eminently helpful to the friends of education elsewhere. This account of the existing legal enactments is succeeded by a reprint of the laws on the subject of Public Instruction, chronologically arranged, and occupying nearly sixty pages more. This is followed by an Appendix, and a copious Index.

Though for much of this work Mr. Mann has been twice paid already, once when printed in the Common School Journal, of which he was editor, and again when incorporated into the first edition of his Tenth Report,— we hope that the Governor and Council, as authorized by the resolve of the last legislature, will give him a handsome compensation,— say for six months' service at least,— in requital of his arduous toil in preparing this new edition, which contains almost fifty pages more than the former. He ought to be well paid for any of his good deeds, for his encouragement in time to come.

While on this delicate, but very substantial, matter of compensation, it may be as well to advert to a fact disclosed in the last Report of the educational Board. Mr. Mann has permitted his train-bearers, and he has many who aspire to that distinguished honor, to be very fervent in their open admiration of the self-denial and public spirit, which induced him to relinquish an immense and profitable practice at the bar, for the laborious and ill-paid office of Secretary to the Board of Education. Other men, who know how active the gentleman was in procuring this office to be created for himself, laugh at the self-denial exhibited by a semi-starved, county-

Digitized by Google

court lawyer, in accepting a post which placed him at the head of the most important "bureau" of this dignified and thoroughly common-schooled Commonwealth, and blest him with a salary exceeding the average payment of most of our principal public functionaries. But now the Board of Education, in rendering a just tribute to the memory of the late Hon. Edmund Dwight, inform us, among other generous deeds of his, that he, in order to obtain the services of their late Secretary, "at the outset, engaged to increase the compensation allowed to that officer by the State, to an amount which secured the object." It is rumored, too, that this disinterested pensioner, was the constant beneficiary of other magnanimous Boston merchants; and that he is none the poorer, at this day, for his tremendous sacrifices of professional lucre. This fact is pleasant to us; and not discreditable to him, unless selfishly concealed. As the Psalm hath it of the worldling: "Men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself." Who will believe that any gentleman can be qualified to care for the interests of the vast numbers of our children and youth, unless he shall shew himself an adept in the art of "taking care of Number One?" If he fails at the first step in the enumeration of human duties, according to the code of worldly morality, who will charge him with the care of attempting for others what he neglects for himself? The man who will not take heed to "the feathering of his own nest," is not likely to impart much warmth to the callow fledglings which nestle elsewhere.

The fresh perusal of the two paragraphs which close this Report, renews the amusement we derived from them when first printed. It would seem that our rhetorical Secretary, apprehensive that the legal details he had been setting forth might be somewhat dull, was bent on "crowning his work" with a perfectly dazzling diadem of oratorical glory. His imagination fairly "bursts up" in a brilliant explosion, which is the more grotesque as occurring in what ought to be a grave public document, passionless, precise, and business-like, emanating as it does from the "Great and General Court." Judging by the stilted style of these ludicrously-sublimated passages, it might have been supposed that Mr. Mann was

Digitized by Google

a pupil of that immensely learned tutor, who gave his reason for not walking from Cambridge to Boston on an afternoon which threatened a thunder-gust, by saying: "I would have peditated to the capital, if the cerulean arc had not portended tonation!" We long kept our old copy of "House Document, Number 1, 1847," for the sake of trying psychological experiments. On reading it as seriously as possible to a gentleman of sluggish and unimaginative mould, he would usually open his eyes with a mystified air, and pronounce it pretty fine. But when properly intoned and emphasized to any person of a lively and susceptible turn, it always threw him into paroxysms of laughter of the severest kind. That the reader may try this experiment on himself, and for himself, we give the whole.

"The Greek rhetorician, Longinus, quotes from the Mosaic account of the creation what he calls the sublimest passage ever uttered: 'God said, Let there be light, and there was light.' From the centre of black immensity, effulgence burst forth. Above, beneath, on every side, its radiance streamed out, silent, yet making each spot in the vast concave brighter than the line which the lightning pencils upon the midnight cloud. Darkness fled, as the swift beams spread onward and outward, in an unending circumfusion of splendor. Onward and outward, still, they move to this day, glorifying, through wider and wider regions of space, the infinite Author from whose power and beneficence they sprang. But, not only in the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, did he say 'Let there be light.' Whenever a human soul is born into the world, its Creator stands over it, and again pronounces the same sublime words, 'Let there be light.'

Magnificent, indeed, was the material creation, when suddenly blazing forth, in mid-space, the new-born sun dispelled the darkness of the ancient night. But infinitely more magnificent is it, when the human soul rays forth its subtler and swifter beams; — when the light of the senses irradiates all outward things, revealing the beauty of their colors and the exquisite symmetry of their proportions and forms; when the light of reason penetrates to their invisible properties and laws, and displays all those hidden relations that make up all the sciences; when the light of conscience illumines the moral world, separating truth from error, and virtue from vice. The light of the newly-kindled sun, indeed, was glorious. It struck upon all the planets, and waked into existence their myriad capacities of life and joy. As it rebounded from them, and shewed their vast orbs all wheeling, circle beyond circle, in their stupendous courses, the sons of God shouted for joy. That light sped onward, beyond Sirius, beyond the Pole-star, beyond Orion and the Pleiades, and is still speeding

Digitized by Google

onward into the abysses of space. But the light of the human soul flies swifter than the light of the sun, and outshines its meridian blaze. It can embrace not only the sun of our system, but all suns and galaxies of suns; ay! the soul is capable of knowing and of enjoying Him who created the suns themselves; and when these starry lustres that now glorify the firmament shall wax dim, and fade away, like a wasted taper, the light of the soul shall still remain; nor time, nor cloud, nor any power but its own perversity, shall ever quench its brightness. Again I would say, that whenever a human soul is born into the world, God stands over it, and pronounces the same sublime fiat, 'Let there be light;' and may the time soon come when all human governments shall coöperate with the divine government, in carrying this benediction and baptism into fulfilment."

The admiration of the famous critic, Longinus, was excited by the condensed sublimity in the Mosaic description. But our ex-Secretary, with sophomorical tastelessness, must needs reverse all this; and disperse that focal blaze into an immense illuminated fog. The beauty of the similitude is lamp-blacked by the smoke of turgid words, rolling forth like the fumes from a still-house chimney. The closing sentence shews the truth of the saying, "that flying is easy, but it is very hard alighting." Nothing can be more clumsily lugged in, than "all human governments coöperating with the divine government" in pronouncing the "same sublime fiat," which requires creative power, and is at the same time "a benediction and a baptism."

Lest it may be thought that Mr. Mann has no rival in this exalted strain of writing, we give the following morsel from an old declamation, of which every word may be found in the dictionary, and which is said to have been pronounced at Yale College, as a little superior article in the same line. "When we take a circumspective cogitation of *Man*, and trace him through all the pandemic eccentricities and incongruities of his *luciferous pilgrimage*, we shall find his nature to be so impleted with protervities, and exacerbated by continual malversations, that he knows not how to abnegate nor predicate even a legendary proposition. Yet his boisterous crocitations make him such a linguacious and libertarian adept in philippic animadversions, that nothing but the most prurient recipient can affect his motley stultiloquence and nugacity."

Digitized by Google

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

THREATS OF DISUNION. — The walls of the Capitol at Washington, have been terribly shaken of late, (or, at least, would have been, if noisy bluster could do it,) by threats of the dissolution of the Union. Were this event to take place, we suppose that the worst which could happen would be the formation of three or four republics, each formed on the exact plan of the present, each animated by the same spirit, each governed by the same laws and customs, and each retaining the same language, religion, and political rights. Each of them also would be vastly stronger, in all respects, than this Union was for the first ten or twenty years of its existence. Were such a change to be accomplished, it may be doubted whether New England would be much agitated or injured by it. There is ample capital among us to employ all the industry of the people; and so long as we retain our habits of industry and social order, we shall be practically independent of the rest of the world.

But we do not believe that the Union will be sundered on the rock of slavery so long as the Mississippi flows into the Mexican Gulf. When the legislature of South Carolina, by the omnipotence of one of its resolves, can turn the current of that "ancient river" into Lake Superior, they may have Mr. Calhoun for their own chief slave-driver. The great and flourishing Free States of the West, will never submit to any arrangement which will cut them off from this road to the ocean-world, by interposing a foreign nation between them and the West Indian seas. Sooner than be deprived of the free navigation of the Mississippi, they would wage deadly war with the Slave States, which could offer them no effective resistance. Neither is there any probability, that the Western Free States and South Western Slave States will ever form a separate Union. Those Free States will never be built into a political ship, composed of the same materials which may have necessitated the wreck of the present gallant bark. They will not accept those political shackles which the Northern States will then have shaken off.

Slavery is an institution, intrinsically odious, and doomed to die long before the millennium. It stands in the way of human advancement, and must yield to the onward movement and pressure of human affairs. Though Congress should take no action on any of the minor questions growing out of negro-slavery, the natural course of things must effect its extirpation. Nothing can prevent the admission of California and New Mexico, which we conquered to please the South, as Free States of the Union. And when this is done, the balance of power will be forever turned against the slave-interest. And if the Slave States, in their infatuation, were to go so far as to form a new and separate federal Union among themselves, what would it avail? The law for the extradition of fugitive slaves, which cumbers our present national constitution would no longer be in force. That law, though but imperfectly executed, exerts a great restraint upon the slaves; and when it shall no longer be enforced, it will be impossible to hold them any where near the borders. The Slave States them-

Digitized by Google

selves will be compelled to keep up a wide margin of comparatively free soil, whose inhabitants will, in time, grow impatient of the "Mezentian cruelty" which binds up their vital and free industry with the dead toil of the bondsman; and they, too, will seek annexation to the North. Besides, a republic of Slave States must be essentially and miserably weak, like all communities where one part of the population must stand in arms night and day, holding watch and ward over the other part,— a part which has every thing to gain, and nothing to lose, by a vigorous insurrection. Such, even now, is the political weakness of those States, that, in the last war with England, their leading statesmen were obliged to apologize for not furnishing their full quota to our armies, by urging the necessity of keeping their men at home, to guard their families against a servile war which threatened them by reason of the British occupation of Florida. Such a republic would have to treat its northern neighbors with most humiliating and galling deference, knowing that open strife with them would be the signal for a general rising of their maddened serfs, and for all the atrocities which make servile wars the most tragical of human woes.

DR. WOODS'S THEOLOGY, VOL. II. — The first volume of this work afforded the basement, massive and firm, of systematic theology. In this volume, the edifice is built up one whole story higher, in Doric strength and simple elegance. The principal subjects discussed, are Divine Providence, moral agency, conscience, the affections, the nature of moral necessity and inability, depravity, total and native, nature and necessity of atonement by Christ, and the nature and cause of regeneration. It will be seen at a glance, by this list of subjects, that we may here expect to find the most vital points of morals and salvation discussed with the Doctor's noted moderation, clearness, wisdom, and power.

We have been specially interested in his curious criticisms of Coleridge on original sin and atonement. Fondly as we doat on Coleridge, it has delighted us to see him so handsomely disposed of on these fundamental points. The tangled skein of his metaphysics is patiently unravelled, and wound up like a ball of yarn, ready for the knitting-needles. But what a strife of minds! A mental duel between the Andover patriarch and S. T. C.! How queer! We seem to see the poet-theologue arrayed for the fight in panoply of burnished steel, with waving crest and floating surcoat, gleaming with gems and gold,

> "In the light that never was
> On sea or land."

He comes, with spear in rest, sweeping over the plain, on a steed whose "neck is clothed with thunder." At the other extremity of the lists, stands a venerable old gentleman, tall and erect, in white cravat and plain suit of decent black, not even wrapped in a "Geneva cloak," and apparently about to be transfixed by that pennoned lance. But see! his keen eye is intently fixed, his right arm is extended with inflexible rigor, his glistening revolver is levelled in deadly

Digitized by Google

aim, he quietly touches the trigger half-a-dozen times; and lo! that gay and gallant cavalier falls from his saddle in mid career, pierced through every joint of his harness. The victor gravely walks up to his victim; and, without exultation, "spoils him of his armor wherein he trusted," gives him Christian burial, and rides home in peace on the tamed and sobered war-horse.

We have also been interested in the lectures on the extent of the atonement. On this point Owen and Baxter wrote books enough to break down any common library shelf; and the matter of dispute between them was, Whether the death of Christ was *solutio ejusdem*, or only *tantundem*? That is, Whether it was a payment of the very thing which, by law, we ought to have paid; or of something else held by God to be equivalent? As to the dispute concerning general and limited atonement, Dr. Woods clearly and dispassionately shews, that each party concedes that, in certain respects, the atonement is limited to the elect; and that in certain other respects, it is general to all mankind; and that the difference between Calvinists on this subject is but a difference in the use of terms, and as to the comparative importance of the different portions of truth which appertain to the subject.

This second volume confirms our opinion, that the work of which it is a part, is destined to be one of the tallest and most fruitful standard-trees in the great orchard of theological literature.

THE PANOPLIST. — We have read the first and second numbers of this new monthly with good liking, though not with entire satisfaction. Its tone is somewhat too unhopeful and uncheerful for us; and it deals too much in dark intimations about defections from orthodoxy, without definitely stating what they are. If, as has been intimated, it is intended to revive the old dispute between the Hopkinsian and the Princeton varieties of Calvinism, it will scour up its antiquated weapons in vain. The day for such a strife in this region has long gone by. The theology of the Panoplist, so far as it has been distinctly developed on its pages, has nothing which would be distasteful to the great body of orthodox men in New England. We particularly relish the only doctrinal article in the February number, on "the original character of man." In this, however, we think that the phrase "image of God" might have had a clearer explanation. As we distinguish between the natural and the moral perfections of God, so ought we to distinguish in regard to the divine image in man. We hold that man was made both in the "image and likeness of God;" that is to say, both in his natural and moral resemblance. In the fall, the moral resemblance was wholly lost; but the natural resemblance, though sadly weakened and defaced, remained. In regeneration, the lost similitude of God, in a moral view, is partially restored; and in heaven, the entire image of God, in more than its pristine perfection and beauty, is forever regained. In this simple view of the subject, all the expressions of the Scriptures find their proper place, whether they are speaking of man as originally constituted in the image of God, as having (in part) lost that image, as having (in part) that image still, or as recovering it through the

Digitized by Google

grace in Christ our Lord. — We ought not to omit the remark, that the last number of the Panoplist is interesting and instructive, and well adapted to Christian family reading.

DR. HITCHCOCK'S ELECTION SERMON. — Good Bishop Sanderson would entitle this admirable discourse "concio ad aulam," a sermon to the court. It is equal to any of that long series, in which, for more than two hundred years, the civic fathers of our goodly Commonwealth have reverently listened to the spiritual counsels of the servants of Christ. President Hitchcock discusses the inseparable union of Religion, Education, and Freedom, in a well-ordered government. If the subject be somewhat worn out, this only proves how necessary it is found to wear it; and that in such relations, it is pre-eminently practical. But it is impossible, that this well-worn subject should pass through the hands of Dr. Hitchcock, and not have "new nap raised upon the old cloth," while it also comes forth from the steeping-tubs of his bright fancy, dyed with fresh lustre, and in all respects as good as new. It will wear first-rate for a great while to come, like the textures which clothed the Israelites for forty years, without "waxing old upon them." Commend us to such a suit! Professor Park of Andover, once a colleague with Dr. Hitchcock at Amherst, is elected to deliver the next election sermon. He also is one of the *elite* among living orthodox ministers; and we shall live a whole year in happy expectation of something worthy of his fame.

MASSACHUSETTS ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY. — The Eighteenth Annual Report of this queer set is, like their documents generally, full of railing, cursing, and blasphemy. Such concentrated bitterness can no where else be found. It would seem to rival the fallen star, called Wormwood, and sufficient to embitter more than "the third part of the waters." It is a condensation of the spirit of malignant philanthropy, and demoniac benevolence. Rage and hatred are its gentlest passions toward all mankind not included in the writers' narrow circle. They have an easy faculty of saying those things when sober, which other men can only get off when drunk! Every man who is not branded with their own mark is, in their estimation, a hypocrite when he does any thing good, and a tenfold reprobate when he does any thing not so good. This Report, and the speeches appended, are like a kitchen-chimney on fire, "flamy and fumy," as Carlyle has it. Their holy madness expends itself mostly on the American Union and the American Church. If the Union is to stand, till *they* pull it down, the end of the world is yet a great way off. Their droll attempts to demolish it are like those of a small cloud of mosquitoes buzzing around the Bunker Hill Monument, and trying to pick in pieces the corner-stone with their pernicious little stings. As for the American Church, it is perfectly safe from injury, until the "gates of hell" shall send out a locust-swarm more formidable than these insect littlenesses. — Meanwhile the good cause of liberty slowly and surely wins its way, in spite of the fanatics of reform, and the darker and more dangerous fanatics who stake all on the perpetuation of slavery and its abominable deeds.

Digitized by Google

VALENTINES. — Within a few years, the use and abuse of valentines, as they are called, has marvellously advanced among us. The custom is essentially foolish, and is made still more foolish by the manner of its observance. Printed missives, with miserable metres, engravings, and other adornments, and costing from two cents to two thousand, are got up in innumerable varieties, and sent in all directions. Most of them are nauseously silly, and many are grossly vulgar and indecent; and they are made the vehicles of much low and cowardly insult to persons of either sex. The observance of St. Valentine's day, though recent among us, is very ancient in Europe. Valentine was a Christian martyr, who suffered under one of the persecuting Roman emperors. On account of his affectionate temper, it became a custom to select friends for special intimacy on the anniversary of his death, the fourteenth of February. Monkish legends helped forward the custom, by teaching that doves, and other loving fowl, selected their mates at this time. Some think that the usage is the relic of a heathenish practice, of a similar nature, observed in connection with the feast called *Lupercalia*. Be this as it may, we are sure that Valentine would prefer to undergo another martyrdom, rather than have his saintly name abused in such shameful and ridiculous sort. If this were not the case, we could wish him the fate desired by an old lady afflicted with St. Anthony's fire and St. Vitus's dance; and who heartily prayed, that both of their saintships might be stricken from the calendar. Indeed, it would be no bad plan to give the whole Romish calendar a thorough purgation.

ORDINATIONS.

Jan. 8. Mr. Benjamin C. Chase, Camden, Me.
" 23. Mr. Levi Wheaton, West Parish, Gloucester, Ms.
Feb. 13. Mr. Aaron Foster, East Charlemont, Ms.

INSTALLATIONS.

Dec. 25. Rev. Edward W. Noble, Truro, Ms.
Jan. 1. Rev. Cyril Pearl, Baldwin, Me.
" 9. Rev. John Wood, Townshend, Vt.
" 10. Rev. Theron Loomis, Raymond, Racine Co., Wis.
" 16. Rev. B. B. Parsons, Madrid, St. Lawrence Co., New York.
" 23. Rev. Giles Pease, Puritan Church, Sandwich, Ms.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Jan. 4. Rev. Jonathan Cone, New Haven, Con. æ. 66.
" 10. Rev. A. B. Crocker, New York, æ. 37.
" 26. Rev. Jonathan Longley, Northbridge, Ms. æ. 60.
Feb. 11. Rev. Charles Frost, Bethel, Me.

Digitized by Google

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY

FOR 1850.....VOL. IV.

THE original Editor of this Work, on resuming his former relation to it as its only responsible conductor, wishes to return his warm thanks to those numerous friends who have heretofore aided the work by their communications, or by their personal influence in its behalf. He would especially render his thanks to those brethren, with whom he was united in carrying it on during the past year. He can now, with propriety, testify to the laboriousness, zeal, and punctuality, with which they fulfilled the duty assigned them; and to the gratifying unanimity which has marked all their proceedings, though every variety of theological sentiment recognized among the Orthodox was represented in their number. The present Editor feels that he has derived the most essential and permanent benefit from his intimate association with them through the labors of that year; and is happy in being permitted to rely on their aid and advice, as future occasion may require. It will be his endeavor, that the work shall continue to exhibit, as it has done, the Orthodoxy of New England. Important as may be the points disputed among us as brethren, they are of far less consequence than the grand doctrines of the Cross on which all are substantially agreed, and the opposing errors which on every side rise up against the common faith. Any attempt to array the peaceful and united churches of Massachusetts, or other States, into rival schools or hostile factions, is to be deprecated with the utmost earnestness.

We do not wish to have any more of controversy on our pages than may be necessary for due interest and instruction in the questions of the day. "Heresy hunting" is no part of our business. The tables, in this respect, are turned, and it is heresy which often hunts us. But when it comes rushing at us with open throat, we shall neither fly nor hide. We shall meet it manfully with all suitable weapons, whether of argument, sarcasm, or Scripture.

There will be no change in the general character of THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY from what it was last year, unless it be in the attempt to make it more popular and domestic. Though arrangements have been made for securing valuable assistance, the Editor solicits still further co-operation, (which will not be wholly unrequited,) of those numerous brethren, both among the ministry and laity, whose ready pens and fervent minds are needed to vary and enrich its successive issues. May the Divine blessing attend these efforts to maintain and spread the truth in Christ!

A. W. McCLURE.

Digitized by Google

THE SUBSCRIBERS,—believing that such a work as THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY is needed, that it has hitherto been useful, and is destined to an increasing circulation and influence,—cordially recommend it to the continued confidence and patronage of the evangelical community.

N. ADAMS,
JOHN A. ALBRO,
E. N. KIRK,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THIS Work will henceforth be issued from the Office of THE PURITAN RECORDER. The two publications, however, will be as distinct as they ever were, each pursuing independently its own appropriate objects, under separate editorial arrangements.

Communications relating to the editorial department, will be addressed to Rev. A. W. McCLURE; and those belonging to the publishing department to WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & COMPANY, 22 School street, Boston.

PROPOSALS TO MINISTERS AND OTHERS.

We invite the attention of Pastors and others to the following proposals:

1. Any pastor or other person who will send us the names of four new subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER or THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, with the pay ($2,00 each), shall receive The Puritan Recorder or The Christian Observatory for one year.

2. Any pastor or other person who will send us a less number of names than four, for either or both of the above publications, with the money for the same, shall be credited 50 cents for each name, in payment for the publication which he may select.

3. Any person who will send us more than four names, and pay for the same, may retain 50 cents per name, as his commission.

We hope that these proposals will induce many to make a special effort, who have expressed a wish for these publications, but for want of pecuniary ability have not taken them. We hope also that many ministers, who are now subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER, will secure to themselves THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY by introducing it among their people.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.

Digitized by Google

Vol. 4.] APRIL, 1850. [No. 4.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY:

A

Religious and Literary Magazine.

A. W. McCLURE, Editor.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.
NO. 22 SCHOOL STREET.
1850.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS.

	Page
Divine and Human Agency,	145
Luther and Melanchthon,	157
Wigglesworth Papers,	165
Misquotations of Scripture,	173
Review:	
Professor Crosby on the Second Advent,	175
Moral Responsibility of Corporations,	183
Observations on Men, Books, and Things:	
The Orthodox Position,	187
The Sabbath in Germany,	189
Carlyle's Latter-Day Pamphlets,	190
The English Language,	191
History of Sabbath-Schools,	192

TERMS.

This work is published at Boston, in monthly numbers of forty-eight octavo pages, forming a volume of five hundred and seventy-six pages, original matter, for two dollars per annum, payable on the delivery of the first number.

The Publishers find that the work cannot be afforded to clergymen, more than to others, at less than the full subscription price; and, therefore, it will be furnished to ALL subscribers at two dollars per annum. We hope that this change, which is made from necessity, and not from inclination, will meet with general approbation.

Every subscription will be continued on our books, till a discontinuance is ordered, and all arrearages are paid.

Subscribers, indebted for the work, are requested, if they please, to send the amount to our office, by mail, at our risk.

Communications relating to the editorial department may be directed to A. W. McClure, No. 22 School Street, Boston.

Communications relating to the business of the office should be directed to the subscribers.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO., Publishers,
No. 22 School St., Boston.

Digitized by Google

1863, Sept. 14.

THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

VOL. IV. APRIL, 1850. No. 4.

DIVINE AND HUMAN AGENCY.

THE agency of God, and the agency of the creature, especially as concurring in the same act, are matters of the highest importance both in the theory and practice of religion. To reconcile these agencies is the great problem in moral theology; and few points have been discussed with greater zeal. Some have asserted the universal agency of God, to the exclusion of any properly voluntary agency on the part of his creatures. Others jealously vindicate the freeness of of the human will from any interference of an infinitely higher power. And when either party has pushed as far as possible in its chosen course, it turns round and wonders at the opposite party, and is anxious to know what is next to take place. Is it not probable, that both of these parties have seized hold of one truth on opposite sides, and have dragged it asunder; instead of embracing it entire? Let minds with one eye, and with one idea, or with two eyes like the flounder's,—on the same side of the head, take a partial survey of the truth, and look at it only in profile, either on the right side or the left. Instead of regarding but half of the fair countenance of truth, let us contemplate it in full face, and comprehensively view all its visible features at once. Let us neither so cling to the agency of God, as to set that of man entirely aside; nor so forget our neces-

Digitized by Google

sary dependence on God, as to put everything upon the activity of the creature. Divine agency and human are not so contrary the one to the other, that they cannot coëxist in the same action at the same instant of time.

We propose to state, in four brief propositions, what may be certainly known, and confidently affirmed, of the mutual relations of the divine agency and the human. Having done this in a popular manner, without technical terms and metaphysical niceties, we would stop short at the first obvious result, and there take our stand, leaving theories, conjectures, and speculations to those who like them.

Our first position is, that divine agency does not preclude human activity in regard to any particular moral action.

This is evident, in the first place, from the facts in the case. When we view the kingdom of providence, though we see God working everywhere, we never see him working alone. We always find him using means, under which he clothes and hides the agency wherewith he accomplishes his purposes. The relation of cause and effect is established universally throughout the works of God, and there is no reason why any cause should be a cause, and produce its usual effects, but that it is his will to have it so.

Even when God would work a miracle, this principle is recognized. When all the laws of nature are suspended or reversed, there is still an acknowledgment of this general law of the necessity of a cause to every effect. When a miracle is wrought, some external human act is generally seen, as its apparent cause; and we only know it to be a miracle by the obvious insufficiency of the means employed, to produce the supernatural effect with which they stand connected. Thus, the famous miracles which were performed in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, were wrought in connection with the rod of Moses as the seeming instrument or cause. So the rapid wave of Jordan was divided, apparently by means of Elijah's mantle. Christ healed the eyes of the blind, by anointing them with a little clay. In like manner, almost every miracle was accompanied by some word, or touch, or sign, or action, on the part of man, which stood to all appearance in the relation of a cause thereto. So that

Digitized by Google

even those stupendous results of almighty power do not utterly exclude the agency and coöperation of man; and much less is human instrumentality set aside in the ordinary and regular course of sublunary affairs.

That divine agency does not preclude human agency is evident, in the second place, from our own consciousness. Whenever we, on the whole, desire an object, we spontaneously make an effort to obtain it. This is a dictate or impulse of nature. We feel, both from habit and reflection, that there is a necessity for our acting. And thus we have the explicit and uniform testimony of our whole conscious existence to the proposition that human activity is not precluded by the divine.

That divine agency does not preclude human agency, is plainly taught in the Scriptures. All the revealed commands and promises of God are manifestly addressed to men as active and free. What sort of beings are they, who are enjoined to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling? To what kind of creatures is it appropriate for God to say: "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" Surely these, and a thousand similar precepts, sufficiently prove, that the agency of the God of the Bible, even in his highest works of grace, does not preclude the active exercise of the faculties he has conferred on the children of men.

Our second position is, that human agency does not preclude divine activity in regard to one and the same moral transaction.

This may be ascertained, in the first place, from the manner in which we pray; for it is on this foundation that prayer, as to its obligation and utility, is based. Praying is a plain concession of dependence on God. It matters not to what denomination the petitioner belongs, or to what metaphysical school. In the fervor of supplication, every good man forgets every thing but the indispensable necessity of the blessing of God to prosper his endeavors. Every man of evangelical feelings prays as if God had repentance and faith to give, and had power to change the sinful heart; and as if these gifts and

Digitized by Google

this power were peculiar to him. It is suprising to see how orthodox men become at the mercy-seat. Whatever the sinner hears in the sermon respecting his ability to make a new creature of himself, independent of the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, he soon learns, from the prayer that follows, how hopeless is his case, if the grace of God come not to his help and salvation. Every man feels that it is a formal and hideous mockery of God solemnly to entreat him to exceed his own powers. It is to offer an intolerable insult to his weakness, to say, in the sermon, that he cannot of his own good will and sovereign pleasure change the hearts of rebellious sinners, without destroying their free agency; and then, in the following prayer, to implore him to go on and do it. It is to deride the imagined impotence of God, to set limits to his power in our theories, and yet urge and entreat him to transcend those limits. He who prays sincerely for the blessing of God to give effect to his exertions for the conversion of the ungodly, by so doing devoutly acknowledges that human efforts do not preclude the agency of God.

This may be illustrated, secondly, by the influence which one man may exert over another. How common it is for us to prevail upon each other to change our views and intentions. Yet when we yield to the arguments of others, we do not lay down our free agency at the feet of those who have induced us to change our minds. We are as free in being influenced, as they are in influencing us. The act of compliance on our part is just as voluntary as the act of persuasion on theirs. How, then, can it be made to appear, that the influence which God exercises to alter our minds is at all hostile to our free will? Why may we not act in entire freeness, even in that sublime crisis of our spiritual affairs, when divine influence is at its highest state; and as freely receive, as God freely gives?

That human agency does not preclude the agency of God, may be gathered, thirdly, from the Scriptures. Who is it, that says: "We are laborers together with God"? Who is it, that speaks of the apostles as being "workers together with Him"? Why are we required to "work out our own salvation, with fear and trembling"? Is it not for this rea-

Digitized by Google

son,—because "it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure"? With what force does the inspired apostle assert this principle, when, speaking of the object of the gospel ministry, he says: "Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working which worketh in me mightily." It is no where intimated, in the Word of God, that where the agency of the Creator begins, that of the creature must needs cease of course: nor are we taught that when we act, it necessarily excludes the presence and operation of divine power. When we read, that "in Him we live, and move, and have our being," this is not to be understood of our corporeal being only, but also of our mental and moral existence. The soul, not less than the body, is God's creature, and not less naturally dependent on him. In harmony with this are all the representations of the Bible.

We are now prepared to take our third position, viz.: that divine agency requires the concurrence of human activity. It not only does not preclude, but absolutely requires it, in every moral action of man.

This we ascertain, first, from the nature of things. God made man in his own image, and therefore *free;*—for who is free, if God is not? Nor let it be deemed that we have ceased to be free because of the fall; for, in consideration of our voluntariness, or power of choice, God has instituted over us a government of law and motive, which government is still in force. Seeing, then, that God has made us free agents, and has legislated for us as such, how can we suppose that he would rule us without reference to our free agency, even if in any view he could? It would be to depart from his published plan of moral government, and to forget all the arrangements he has made for carrying it on. The very method in which God proposes to exercise his agency, calls into action the voluntary powers of man. He did not contemplate that his grace should celebrate its triumphs by dragging its reluctant subjects, bound in chains of compulsion to its hated car. Grace delights not in enforcing a constrained obedience and homage; but glories in winning the consent of the affections, and owns none but willing captives as the trophies of its heavenly conquests.

Digitized by Google

That divine agency requires the concurrence of human agency appears, also, from the representations of Scripture. When Paul was about to be shipwrecked at the island of Melita, he told his companions in misfortune, that it had been revealed to him by the angel of God, that there should be no loss of life among them, but only of the ship. Yet, when the mariners would have taken to the boat, and left the ship and passengers to their fate, Paul said to the centurion and soldiers: "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." And now did the centurion reply: "Nay, Paul; God has promised you that we shall all escape with our lives, and therefore we shall be saved, whether we hinder the desertion of the sailors or not?" No; he felt that notwithstanding they had the promise of God, they were not at liberty to neglect the use of the proper means of ensuring their deliverance from peril: and so they cut off the ropes of the boat, and allowed it to drift away.

When the Israelites stood in utter despair at the Red Sea, hemmed in by mountains on either side, and hotly pursued by the vengeful Egyptian, Moses said unto the people: "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." But the Lord, as it were in rebuke, said unto Moses: "Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." Moses had said: "Stand still!" the Lord's command was: "Go forward!" It was a miraculous deliverance, but not the less did it demand that they should act for themselves in that great emergency.

When Christ told the man with the withered hand to stretch it out, what if he had made answer: Lord my hand is withered, I cannot stretch it out, until thou shalt first have healed it! Think you he would have experienced a miraculous cure? But no: he forgot how shrunken and lifeless was the limb. He acted as though he had been able to extend it, and lo! he was able: he stretched it forth; "and it was restored whole, like as the other."

It was this full conviction, that divine agency requires the concurrence of our instrumentality, which girt with strength to do, and courage to dare, and fortitude to endure, the mind of that apostle who labored and suffered more than all his

Digitized by Google

brethren. He thus sets forth the tenor of his toilsome and painful life: "I endure all things for the elects' sakes, that they may also attain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." He did not argue, that the elect would be saved, if they were to be saved, without any trouble to him: nor ask himself, Why should I endure all these things,—this labor, and peril, and suffering for the elects' sakes, when their salvation is already made sure by the divine decree? Not he! he viewed the eternal purpose of God as a call to duty. He regarded the elect as inestimable jewels, and resolved to search the world for them, and work as hard, and suffer as patiently, as though God could do nothing without him.

Our fourth position is, that human agency also requires divine aid in all its right moral actions.

Here we would just allude to the conscious weakness of our nature. How often do we desire things which are beyond our power. All our wishes would be vain, and all our endeavours fruitless, if God were not our helper, and added not his blessing to our feeble exertions.

In the next place, the whole course of events is adapted, if wisely considered, to convince us that it is impossible for a creature to exist or act independently of the will of the Creator. All things and all events are of necessity affected by the all-pervading presence and ever-working energies of such a being as God.

Again; we might appeal to religious experience, and ask the approved disciple of Christ, What art thou in and of thyself? What canst thou effect by thine unassisted power? What would become of thee, if left to thyself? Does not all thy Christian experience teach thee, that active and able as thou art when strengthened from on high, thou art sure to droop and die, if God withdraw his supporting hand?

But we choose rather to cut this matter short by appealing to the decisive declarations of Holy Writ. Here we find full, and varied, and explicit assertions, of the necessity of divine aid to the success of the moral endeavors of men. We have one of them in the passage where the apostle reminds the believers at Corinth of the respective parts sustained by him and by Apollos, in the instrumental work of their conversion

Digitized by Google

to Christ, and of their obligations to the grace of God, who gave a distinct efficacy to the respective labors of his servants. "Who, then, is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." Even so our Saviour teaches, that in order to our being fruitful in good, we must depend on the supplies and succors of his grace. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me;"—"for without me ye can do nothing." Again he speaks, and says: "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." The privilege of becoming the sons of God is represented by St. John the evangelist, as belonging to "as many as received Christ, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Of the same purport are the strong, decisive expressions of St Paul: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves: but all our sufficiency is of God." And also this powerful declaration: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy."

We now have these four points briefly, but abundantly established; viz.: that, in regard to right moral action, divine agency does not preclude human activity, neither does human agency exclude divine; and not only so, but that the divine agency really requires a concurrent human activity, while also, human agency stands in absolute need of divine aid.

These propositions greatly illustrate the state of the case with man, and the nature of the divine administration of the affairs of men. Sir William Hamilton, the distinguished professor of moral and intellectual science, at Edinburg, tells us, that there is no medium between fate and chance; and there are many who agree with him. This sentiment we regard as altogether false and pestilential. The moral government of God is utterly and equally opposed to the doctrines of fatalism, and to those of chance. The world is not governed by a blind, irresponsible, unintelligent, and inexorable

Digitized by Google

fate; nor is it the sport and play-thing of wild and destructive contingencies. It is ruled by the will of an all-wise and all-perfect Sovereign, whose manner of working is ever in accordance with the free moral nature he has given to his creatures. In every moral act of theirs, there is the presence and coöperation of two wills, one comparatively weak, and completely controlled by another infinitely great; and yet the inferior will is not at all deprived of its voluntary character. So great is God's power, that he effects all his pleasure in the soul of man, without causing the slightest disturbance in the exercise of man's voluntary powers. The eternal free choice of the divine free agent effects, in time, a corresponding free choice in the mind of the created free agent.

Man has much to do toward his own salvation. His dependence on God in this matter is active, and not merely passive. God will bless him rather in working, than in standing still. We are to labor and agonize, as though every thing depended on ourselves; and, at the same time, we are to pray and to feel, as though all depended on grace. Doubtless, we are actively dependent for salvation, even as all creatures are actively dependent for every thing they obtain by effort. We know, from his example, that Satan understands the subject in this way. That subtle spirit has been studying these things some six thousand years, and yet he is no fatalist. He does not argue, If the wicked are predestined to be lost, they will be lost; and I shall have them, whether I trouble myself to destroy them or not. No; he employs all his arts and devices; and goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. In this respect, it is right to learn from an enemy; and we may well receive a lesson in vigilance and activity from the prince of the power of the air. If we fold our hands, and sit still, the devil will not. Shame to us, if that wicked one is more zealous to drag sinners down to the abodes of woe, than we are to save ourselves and others from the pains of hell.

The doctrines of divine sovereignty and human dependence, apply to all our affairs. Men are dependent on God, whether they know it or not. Let them deny it ever so stoutly, it will not alter the case. The most hardened and

Digitized by Google

unfeeling sinner is in the hands of a God who has not done with him yet. The doctrines in question, have been far too limited in their application. Election ought to be regarded as that branch or department of God's general and particular providence which relates to the spiritual concerns of his creatures, even as the other branch or department relates to their temporal affairs. In regard to either, men ought to feel and act on uniform principles. If they have such a view of their dependence, as shall make them wait for a harvest without tilling the soil, then let them wait for converting grace without working out their own salvation. But let no man who busily toils in his daily vocation fail, also, to insure his getting to heaven.

Why are not men as dependent for power to sin, as for power to do any thing else? Does it take more power to do right than it does to do wrong? Here, we say, are certain rebels, who have been taken prisoners, with arms in their hands. After a period of confinement, their lord offers to release them, on condition that they shall return to their proper occupations, and be quiet citizens. Now suppose them to answer, that they cannot comply with the condition, because, though they have power enough to fight and kill, to plunder and burn, they have not strength sufficient to carry on their lawful trades! They are strong enough to wield the weapons of their rebellion, but alas, they are so feeble, that they cannot cast them down to the ground! Just such, is the sinner's plea of inability to repent. The fact is, that impenitent sinners, instead of not having power enough, have a great deal too much, while they are exerting all they have, in opposition to God and their own salvation.

Great is the insincerity of such men. Every close observer is aware that men do not talk despondingly about their dependence on God, in regard to anything they sincerely desire, and are determined upon obtaining. It is only when disagreeable duties are urged, that they find it convenient to remember that they are poor, dependent creatures, who have nothing to do but to wait God's time, because faith and repentance are God's alone to give. Now this is very true; but what is it to the purpose? Suppose you go to some idle

Digitized by Google

and intemperate pauper, with a family made wretched by his indolence and its concomitant vices; you earnestly entreat him to be a man, to apply himself diligently to labor, and abandon the intoxicating cup. But lo! he asks you somewhat tartly, "Where is your orthodoxy? do you not know that industry and temperance are the gifts of God?" This, to be sure, is a true saying; but could you regard the man as sincere in uttering it? No; you would be disgusted at his hypocrisy. A true sense of our dependence on God is an eminent attainment in grace; and is exclusively peculiar to the true Christian. Such grace as is implied in this plea, the delaying sinner knows full well that he does not possess. He must be sensible, that he is like the sturdy sluggard surveying his neglected garden, and affecting to say in sober earnest: "If those weeds and brambles are to be rooted out, they will be rooted out: but, ah me! what can I do, who am bound hand and foot by the eternal decrees of heaven?" God has never decreed to do any thing contrary to his promises, encouraging to the highest action as they are. Election is the draw-bridge at the gate of heaven, not raised to keep us out, but lowered to let us in. No man will ever enter those portals, without finding that God had always intended to have him there, and provided a place for him from before the foundation of the world.

We are ever to remember, that God's secret will is not our rule of duty. God's revealed will, made known in his Word, is the standard of our duty, and there is not the least danger of our coming too near it. There is no fear that the Judge will rebuke us at the last day for obeying him too well. He will never say: "Presumptuous servant! why had you not a more trembling regard to the sacredness of my secret will? Know that by your criminal audacity in acting so close to the letter and spirit of my revealed commands, you were guilty of great disrespect to my hidden counsels, and had nearly prevented their fulfilment!" God is a Sovereign, and we do as we please: we are entirely dependent, and yet voluntary, agents. No man is able to shew by argument that these two doctrines entirely harmonize; but we know that, in point of fact, they are consistent, — and this is

Digitized by Google

enough. They are just as true without our being able to explain the mode of their agreement, as they would be if we were able: and there the matter ought to end. What would it avail us, if we could discover God's secret will, seeing that we could neither help nor hinder it? Let us, then, take God at his word. Let us simply believe, and we shall undoubtedly, be fully justified at the judgment of the great day.

The moral government of God is glorious to him and helpful to man. It is, indeed, the joy of angels and rejoicing of saints. It is firm, without violence. It is sure of attaining its ultimate ends by appointed means; without infringing the rights, or suspending the laws, of moral agency. This alone can bring good out of evil: and console us amid our sorrows, with the sure promise of eventual good. The afflicted Christian fully comforts himself with the thought, "My God and Father reigns, and will cause all these troubles to work together for the best!" Take away the sovereignty of God, and what remains for the believer, but to sink in absolute despair. This doctrine affords him the highest encouragement to moral effort. The active character of the Sovereign rouses his faithful subjects to action. They see that it is the plan of his administration to "tie means and ends together:" and this is all that convinces them that it is not in vain to resort to the use of means. Indeed, no man would exert himself in any way, had not the decrees of God established an invariable connection between cause effect. Had he not eternally ordained that like causes should in all cases produce like effects, no man would know how to go to work to obtain desired ends;—no man could have a motive for action. In addition to this uniformity in his dealings, we have the gracious promises of God: and what higher incentive can we have to bestir ourselves, that in doing his will we may secure the covenanted blessing? Let us, by a practical application of these truths, be excited to obedience and faithfulness. Then shall we join at last, the angelic hosts and the saints in light, who with the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, are singing, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!

Digitized by Google

LUTHER AND MELANCHTHON.*

In August of the year 1518, just at the time when Luther was in extreme want of a learned helper, there appeared at Wittenberg, as professor of philosophy and of the Greek literature, a young man but twenty-one years old. Of him, Erasmus, the greatest master of classical learning in the sixteenth century, had, five years before, exclaimed in astonishment, with a somewhat profane exclamation: "What hopes are authorized in regard to this Melanchthon, yet a youth, aye, a mere boy, who stands almost equally high in his knowledge of either of the classical tongues! What keenness in argument! What purity and elegance of expression are his! What rare and comprehensive knowledge! What multifarious reading! What delicacy and marvellous refinement of genius!" At the critical moment, the Lord of the Church sends able and faithful friends, to his great instruments, that they may not faint in the strife, but be encouraged and strengthened, while they make good, and remove, each other's failings.

> "Sure, we are made as notes of music are,
> For one another, though dissimilar;
> Such difference, without discord, as doth make
> Those magic sounds, in which all spirits shake
> Like trembling leaves in a continuous air."

It is no small proof of a divine providence exercised over the work of the Reformation, that each of its great conductors had a faithful Jonathan, Luther his Melanchthon, Zwingle his Œcolampadius, Knox his Welsh, Farel his Viret, Calvin his Beza. We reckon these reformatory friendships among the most pleasing and attractive incidents in the history of the sixteenth century. The above named pairs all stand in similar relations to each other, in regard to the necessary completeness of theological, as well as of moral or religious, character; and they produce the impression of a harmonious accord, which ever takes place,

* Translated from the Kirchenfreund for February.

Digitized by Google

Where the gentle mate the strong,
And rigid with the mild belong.

We would now establish this by our first-named example; not without a wish, at the same time, to counteract, in some measure, the prevalent narrowness of judgment which overestimates one of these men at the expense of the other.

Luther and Melanchthon formed, at their first acquaintance, a firm friendship; though there was a difference of fourteen years in their ages, and their gifts, character, and temperament were very different, and in part mutually opposite. This friendship was repeatedly disturbed, subsequent to the year 1536, partly through the impetuosity and capriciousness of the former; and partly through the pliability of the latter towards the Romanists and the Reformed, — a pliability which was by no means chiefly owing merely to his natural timidity and softness of disposition, but very much to his deep humility and tenderness of conscience. Of all the Reformers he most felt the heavy responsibility which weighed upon him, and most fully foreboded the confusions and dangers which afterwards followed the great rent in the Christianity of the West. But those disturbances were very transient. The mutual esteem and love of both was too firmly seated to be permanently overcome by human weaknesses.

In his outward appearance, Melanchthon was small and insignificant. He seemed younger than he really was. But Luther at once appreciated the precious pearl which was hidden in this mean casket. As early as the eleventh of October, 1518, he wrote from Augsburg a letter to his "dearest Philip." On the eighteenth of December, the same year, he invited him to supper, in a very humorous letter, addressed to "Philip Melanchthon, Schwartzerd,* the Greek, Latin, Hebrew, German, everything but Barbarian." This sportive tone shews how near to Luther he was at this time. Melanchthon, on his part, loved Doctor Martin like a father. "Rather

* Schwartzerd, *Anglice*, Black-earth, was his real name, which, according to the fashion of the scholars of that age, was thrown into the Greek form *Melanchthon*.

Digitized by Google

let me die," he writes in April, 1520, "than be parted from this man." In another letter, of November in the same year, we read: "Martin's welfare is dearer to me than life; so that nothing is so grievous to me as to be obliged to do without him."

This love was firmly grounded on a deep mutual respect, and thus had a substantial support, a strictly religious base and bounds. Melanchthon, as he wrote to Scheurl in September, 1518, saw in Luther, not only "the most honorable, excellent, and learned of men," but also "the model of sincere Christian piety." When Luther wrote to him, from Wartburg, of his failing health, Melanchthon thus communicated the fact to Spalatin: "I fear that he will wear himself out with trouble of mind, not surely on his own account, but for us, that is to say,—for the Church. Thou knowest how carefully the earthen vessel, containing so great a treasure, should be preserved; were it lost to us, well might we feel that the anger of God is unappeasable. Through him is the light of Israel enkindled; and were it quenched, what hope would remain to us? Therefore, spare no pains, not only for his sake, but for our's,—and *especially* for our's, since I know how much he prefers to depart, and to be with Christ." "O that with my cheap life I might buy the life of him, than whom the world has none diviner!"—"I commit to your fidelity the care of his health; for oh, we can never sufficiently appreciate such a man as this!" On hearing the disastrous news of Luther's death, Melanchthon wrote to Jonas, February 9th, 1546: "I have this morning received thy letter with the sad tidings of the death of our venerated father and teacher, Dr. Martin Luther. He was in truth the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." In like manner he expressed himself to the students: "Gone is the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof, who guided the Church in this last age of the world."

Luther, on his part, must have esteemed in his young friend such vast erudition, such rare truthfulness and conscientiousness, and such unfeigned humility and piety; and he must have owned in him a distinguished instrument of the Lord's work. He wrote to Reuchlin, at the end of the year

Digitized by Google

1518: "Our Philip Melanchthon is a wonderful man. There is scarce any thing about him which is not superhuman, and yet he reposes in me the highest confidence and friendship." So lowly was this giant mind, as oftentimes to place himself beneath Melanchthon. Thus he writes to Lange, August 18th, 1520: "Perhaps I am Philip's forerunner, and am, like Elias, to prepare the way for him in spirit and in power, to astonish Israel and the servants of Ahab." A year later, he called upon Melanchthon to take the field against Emser, and told him at the time: "Thou wilt certainly have me for an auxiliary, though but poorly disciplined. Still, I shall never regret to have fought, and sustained the hardest service, under such a leader. Any man ought to be willing to fight under one, who, to theological science, unites such a spirit and such varied learning; who is so familiar with the natural sciences, since he has sweat so many years in the medical schools; and who has all the sayings of the philosophers at his finger's ends." In the year 1523, he wrote to Billicanus: "I esteem Philip no otherwise, than as I do myself, except as to his learning and blamelessness of life, in which respects it is not enough to say that he excels me,—he puts me to shame."

Here, then, we have a pure Christian friendship, which was grounded upon an admiring recognition, in either party, of the gifts of divine grace in the other. And how distinct were the characters thus intimately linked together! But on this very account was their union so important. Each was not only a sort of complement to the other, but they necessarily belonged together, in order that the work of the Reformation, which was by far too extensive for one man, might be carried out more certainly, and guarded from excesses.

This friendship might not unfitly be compared to a marriage, in which Luther would represent the masculine, and Melanchthon the feminine, principle. Luther was of a Pauline temper, an altogether heroic man. Gigantic strength and creative depth are his chief attributes. He was, therefore, particularly fitted to originate the Reformation. He only had the courage and fortitude which such a work demands. War was his proper element. All his deeds are

Digitized by Google

battles; all his words reek with powder. It must be confessed, that, not seldom, he was too impetuous in his onsets, dashing along like an uncurbed charger; and in his polemics, like Eck, Emser, and Henry VIII., hurling the coarsest personalities. But Melanchthon, on the contrary, was of a John-like temper. In him receptivity predominated. Softness, mildness, quiet, and discretion, were his leading peculiarities. He loved peace above all things; and we may imagine the deep pain he must have felt in his later years at the rising distractions of Protestantism; as well as his intense longing after unity in the Church, and deliverance from the madness of theologues. He was, therefore, not well adapted to be a champion. Because of his timidity and love of peace, he would have conceded too much to the Papists, and made the Reformation in great part re-actionary. But instead of this, it was his part to curb the wild energy of Luther, to calm down his excitements, and restrain him from many inconsiderate steps. Luther has, in this view, very neatly described himself. He says, in 1529, in his preface to Melanchthon's Commentary upon the Epistle to the Colossians: "My mind, from the fact that it is unpolished and unskilled in the fine arts, does nothing but pour out a multitude of words. According to its destiny, it is turbulent and stormy; and hence is a fighter, and must contend with innumerable wild beasts. I am born to this, and must take the field and wrestle against devils and their crews; and, therefore, my books are very stormy and contentious. I must root out stumps and stones, cut down thorns and hedges, and be the rough woodsman who clears and prepares the ground. But Master Philip follows gently and quietly after, and pleasantly plants and waters, agreeably to the gifts which God has so richly bestowed upon him." We cannot know how far Luther might have led astray by his ire, but for the good genius of this noble spirit, gentle as that of a maiden. But this may be easily conceived. That he, indeed, suffered himself to be softened down by Melanchthon, may be seen, among other examples, by the following, which is related by the latter. Luther once shewed himself to be inflamed beyond measure; and there was deep silence around him.

Digitized by Google

No one dared to lay his hand upon the angry lion. After a while, Melanchthon handed him the following verse:

"Thou that dost thy foemen tame,
Must subdue thyself the same." *

Upon this Luther began to smile, and said: "Well, we will dispute no more about it."

There is a second point of difference to be noticed. Luther was a man of *the people*. His bold and forcible eloquence, his genial mastery in the use of the German speech, his sound understanding of all the relations of life, and his exhaustless mother-wit, qualified him to act upon the great masses. He had the rare talent of expressing even the profoundest ideas in a way to be generally intelligible. In this point Melanchthon was deficient. He was a man of *learning* in the strictest sense of the word, and deserved the honorable title, "Teacher of Germany." And thus, by his scientific thoughtfulness, and his rich classical culture, and his elegant Latin style, he was far more able than his older friend, to operate on learned men, and to interest them in the work of Reformation. What Luther maintained with the fire of enthusiasm, received from Melanchthon a scientific confirmation, and so he became the chief framer of a Protestant theology. Moreover the learning of Melanchthon was indispensable to the German Bible-translation, although that was essentially the work of Luther. The former revised the different parts before they went to the press; and, but for his aid, it would have had many more of faults and defects. How important his philosophical and logical discipline were, in the discussions with the Papal scholastics, may be seen, for example, at the Augsburg imperial diet in 1530, at the religious conferences at Worms in 1540 and 1557, as also at Regensburg in 1541. How ably, on the last named occasion, Melanchthon conducted himself, and how greatly he served the truth, is intimated by Luther himself, when, in 1541, he wrote to the Prince Elector of Saxony: "The Papists, God be praised! stand in great dread of him and his scholars."

* Vince animos iramque tuam, qui cetera vincis.

Digitized by Google

With this difference, a third is connected. Luther had not really a systematic and philosophic-organizing mind. Great as was the similarity between him and his chief teachers, the Apostle Paul and Augustine, he differed from them essentially in being very deficient in the reflective faculty. He ever relied upon present fulness. He had a bold grasp of the deepest things, a noble scientific instinct, and was full of new ideas; all of which, no doubt, hung well together, only he never troubled himself, or took any pains, to combine the scattered elements into an organic whole. To be sure, he had little leisure for this, amid his incessant conflicts abroad, where one enemy ever took at once the place of another. And yet it may be said, that this trait matched well with his restless and impetuous temper. Melanchthon, on the other hand, was a warm friend to order. His elegant classical studies had cultivated in him the taste for form and harmony. He tells us, that many of his contemporaries, especially among the learned, had fallen out with the Roman Church; but that they would not yet attach themselves to the Reformation, because they had no clear view of its doctrines *in their connection*. They said: "I know whom to shun, but know not whom to follow." He, therefore, strove with zeal to collect the single building-stones which Luther had dug up from the quarry of God's Word, and had thrown away as a millionaire might his small change, and to rear from them a habitable house. This he did especially in his "Common-places," which was the first doctrinal manual of the Protestant churches, and exerted an incalculable influence on the studious youth and on the learned. Also the most important symbolical book of the Lutheran Church, the Augsburg Confession, is confessedly his work. It could have been composed only by a reflective and systematically ordering mind. Still, in this respect, Calvin must be ranked very far above Melanchthon; as will be seen at a glance, by the slightest comparison of the "Institutes" of the former with the "Common-places" of the latter. A striking difference also exists between the commentaries of Luther and Calvin. The former casts the most penetrating glances into the heart of the Bible, and usually seizes the true sense at once and

Digitized by Google

instinctively; but he never troubles himself with grammatical criticism or logical development, and never sticks to his post, but merely makes the text his point of departure, from whence he goes forth scattering his thoughts as they occur to him in that connection. Calvin, on the contrary, observes the strictest order and discipline: he follows, step by step, wherever the sacred writer leads him, and refrains from irrelevant remarks, wide-sweeping digressions, and far-fetched allusions and conjectures. He combines with a rich depth of theological thought, critical acuteness and logical coherence.

We must notice, finally, that Melanchthon completed the position of Lutheranism in its relations to the Calvinist churches. It is notorious, that Luther was implacably rigid and sharp, and even unamiable and repulsive, towards the Swiss divines, on account of their peculiar views of the sacrament. No union of these two tendencies of Protestantism was to be expected from him. On the other hand, Melanchthon, at a later period, when the Lutheran zealots drove the thing to an extreme, ever inclined more and more to the side of the Reformed; not certainly to those who held the Zwinglian doctrine as to the Lord's Supper, but to those who held the Calvinist view, which, meanwhile, presented itself as an attempt to reconcile the extremes. Melanchthon's way of thinking is to be regarded as a bridge from strict Lutheranism to the Reformed churches. It is, therefore, very observable, that Zacharias Ursinus, the principal composer of the most extensively used and most important of the symbolical books of the Reformed, namely, the Heidelberg Catechism, was a pupil and an intimate friend of Melanchthon.

Such were the two leaders of the German Reformation, each equally worthy, though on very different grounds, to bespeak our veneration and gratitude; the one overwhelming us, and sweeping us along with him,—the other softening and kindly quickening us; each equally necessary for the founding of the Lutheran Church, as well as for the complete manifestation of its theological and religious life, and for the prosperous execution of its mission. The dying out of the temper of Melanchthon, his profound learning, his gentleness, his placability, his love of peace, and above all

Digitized by Google

his holy longings after the restoration of the lost unity of the Church, is as great a misfortune as the dying out of the strong, decided, and controversial temper of his friend. One hallowed spot in the Castle Church at Wittenberg, the theatre of their renown, covers them both; and so would we not put them asunder, but would admire the unity of their manifold gifts, and praise God who so wisely combined them. The transient interruptions of a friendship so classical, and so important to the Church, have long been forgotten; but their lasting love has gone over with their purified spirits into the mansions of the blest, whither so many thousands of souls have been guided by their words and deeds.

WIGGLESWORTH PAPERS.

In our last number, we gave a brief sketch of the life and character of the ancient and reverend pastor of Malden. Among his papers, placed at our disposal by the liberality of the gentleman to whom we then referred, were many which possess a religious and historical interest, though not available in preparing a biographical sketch of their author. Some two or three of them will be presented on these pages, for the consideration of the great and growing class of readers, who feel a vital interest in all that illustrates the early character of New England.

The first document to be offered will consist of portions of an unpublished poem, bearing the title: "God's Controversy with New England, written in the time of the great drought, Anno 1662. By a lover of New England's Prosperity." This was a dark time for the Puritans on either side of the Atlantic. It was the year of the passage of the infamous "Act of Uniformity," by which two thousand godly ministers were silenced at once, and subjected to most cruel and odious persecutions. The perfidious house of Stuart, then but newly restored to the British throne, was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the pious non-conformists.

Digitized by Google

The colonial charters and liberties of New England were placed in the utmost peril; and our fathers were quaking under the apprehension of losing all that they had sought and found on these desolate shores. It is not strange, that they should be disposed, at such a gloomy season, to look upon the sickness and drought, with which they were then afflicted, as so many direct tokens of divine displeasure at some degeneracy among themselves.

In the poem before us, Mr. Wigglesworth, after a brief "request to the reader," couched both in English and Latin verse, goes on to describe "New England planted, prospered, declining, threatened, punished." He gives at first, an interesting sketch of the earliest and best days, the golden age of New England. Next he speaks, in a few lines, of the degeneracy of the times in which he wrote. Then, the Divine Being is introduced, in a different and more elegiac strain, uttering his rebukes and denouncing retribution, unless there shall be speedy repentance. The poet closes with a sketch of the recent divine judgments upon the people, with a blast of the woe-trumpet announcing direr calamities at hand, and with a fervent protestation of his love and attachment to the land of his adoption. From this poem we give a dozen stanzas, which have a value above that of their poetic merit, in the picture they afford of a state of society such as the world has never seen, before or since the period they describe.

"Beyond the great Atlantick flood,
There is a region vast;
A country where no English foot
In former ages passed:
A waste and howling wilderness,
Where none inhabited
But hellish fiends, and brutish men
That devils worshippéd.

"This region was in darkness placed,
Far off from heaven's light,
Amidst the shaddows of grim death,
And of eternal night.
For there the Sun of righteousness
Had never made to shine
The light of his sweet countenance,
And grace which is divine:

Digitized by Google

" Until the time drew nigh, wherein
The glorious Lord of hostes
Was pleased to lead his armies forth
Into those forrein coastes;
At whose approach the darkness sad
Soon vanishéd away,
And all the shaddows of the night
Were turned to lightsome day.

" The dark and dismal Western woods,
(The Devil's den whilere,)
Beheld such glorious gospel shine,
As none beheld more cleare.
Where Sathan had his scepter swayed
For many generations,
The King of kings set up his throne
To rule amongst the nations.

" Thy terrours on the Heathen folk,
O great Jehovah, fell:
The fame of thy great acts, O Lord,
Did all those nations quell.
Some hid themselves for fear of thee
In forrests wide and great;
Some to thy people croutching came,
For favor to entreat.

" Some were desirous to be taught
The knowledge of thy wayes,
And being taught, did soon accord
Therein to spend their dayes.
Thus were the fierce and barbarous
Brought to civility,
And those who lived like beasts, or worse,
To live religiously.

" O happiest of dayes, wherein
The blind receivéd sight,
And those that had no eyes before,
Were made to see the light!
The wilderness hereat rejoyc't,
The woods for joy did sing,
The valleys and the little hills
Thy praises echoing.

" Here was the hiding-place, which thou,
Jehovah, didst provide
For thy redeemed ones, and where
Thou didst thy jewels hide
In perilous times, and saddest dayes
Of sack-cloth and of blood,
When th' overflowing scourge did pass
Through Europe, like a flood.

Digitized by Google

" While almost all the world beside
Lay weltering in their gore:
We, only we, enjoyd such peace
As none enjoyd before.
No forrein foeman did us fray,
Nor threatened us with warrs:
We had no enemyes at home,
Nor no domestick jarrs.

" The Lord had made, (such was his grace,)
For us a Covenant,
Both with the men, and with the beasts,
That in this desart haunt:
So that through places wilde and waste
A single man, disarmed,
Might journey many hundred miles,
And not at all be harmed.

" Our Governor was of ourselves,
With all his Bretheren,
For wisdom and true piety,
Select, and chosen men,
Who, ruling in the fear of God,
The righteous cause maintained,
And all injurious violence,
And wickedness, restrained.

" Our temp'rall blessings did abound;
But spirituall good things
Much more abounded to the praise
Of that great King of kings.
God's throne was here set up; here was
His tabernacle pight;
This was the place, and these the folk,
In whom he took delight.

" Our morning starrs shone all day long;
Their beams gave forth such light,
As did the noon-day sun abash,
And 's glory dazle quite.
Our day continued many yeers,
And had no night at all;
Yea, many thought the light would last,
And be perpetuall.

" Such, O New England was thy first,
Such was thy best estate;
But, loe! a strange and sudden change
My courage did amate.
The brightest of our morning starrs
Did wholly disappeare;
And those that tarried behind,
With sack-cloth covered were."

Digitized by Google

At this point, the Lord, as in the book of Job, becomes an interlocutor; and utters an extended remonstrance against the defections of this favored people, and a terrible denunciation of wrath. The poet then describes the "flying darts" of sickness, bringing to an end those healthful days in which it used to be said, that "a draught of New England's air was wholesomer than a sup of Old England's ale." The change, as he describes it, was very remarkable; and it was then, as we learn from another source, that the frightful disease known as *cynanche trachealis*, or croup, was first heard of.

> "New England, where for many yeers
> You scarcely heard a cough,
> And where Physicians had no work,
> Now finds them work enough.
> Now colds and coughs, Rheums and sore throat,
> Do more and more abound;
> Now Agues sore, and Fevers strong,
> In every place are found."

To times of sickness, wherein the healthful were too few "to help the languishing," succeeded unfruitful seasons; and at last, came a drought whose extremity was at that time presaging a famine, while still sorer judgments seemed to be impending over the land. The poem ends with an affectionate appeal to New England, which the author closes by telling her:

> "Thou still hast in thee many praying saints,
> Of great account, and precious with the Lord,
> Who daily powre out unto him their plaints,
> And strive to please him, both in deed and word.
>
> "Cheer on, sweet souls, my heart is with you all,
> And shall be with you, maugre Sathan's might;
> And wheresoere this body be a thrall,
> Still in New England shall my soul delight."

The next document we would present is a scheme of family government, which gives in full the views of our fathers on this all-important subject; and which, with a few slight exceptions, would be perfectly adapted to use at the present day. It is drawn up on a "broad sheet," apparently to be circulated in manuscript among the author's parishioners.

Digitized by Google

FAMILY GOVERNMENT.

Duties of Christian parents to their children, which may be reduced to these principal heads:

First Rule. It is the duty of parents to endeavor to bring their children within the compass of the Covenant. Here let them,

1. Labor to be in covenant with God themselves, who will entertain theirs with them.

2. Present them to baptism, (the seal of the Covenant,) with convenient speed.

3. Give them good names.

Second Rule. To love them dearly; yet, 1st, not inordinately, with a cockering, blind affection.

2dly. In prudence to conceal that love, so as not to embolden them in evil.

Third Rule. To pity and pray for them.

1. Let parents bewail the corruption of nature propagated to their children.

2. Let them bewail their own personal evils, and pray that their children may not inherit their corruptions.

3. Let them earnestly beg a blessing upon all means for their good, and that they may be sanctified by grace from their tender years.

Fourth Rule. That they nourish them soberly; that is, maintain them according to their ability and rank, with moderation,—without excess, allowing them,

1. Food; — wholesome; — seasonable; — enough.

2. Apparel; — honest; — comely; — comfortable.

3. With other necessaries.

Fifth Rule. To keep them under obedience.

Directions. 1. Hold thy children in awe.

2. Labor that their awe may proceed from love, rather than servile fear.

3. Let your government be upright; — loving; — even, (always like itself, not changeable;) — equal, (to all alike;) — and moderate, or free from rigor.

Sixth Rule. To train them up in godliness and good manners.

Train them up; that is, teach them; — and see that they practice.

1st. Train them up in godliness. Here, in general, begin to plant virtue, and weed out any apparent vice betimes.

(1.) Teach them to pray to God, morning and evening.

(2.) To give thanks before and after meat.

(3.) To rehearse the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed.

(4.) Catechize them, according to their capacity, more largely in points of religion.

(5.) Accustom them to read the Scriptures daily.

(6.) Restrain them from evil courses by your parental authority.

(7.) Keep them from evil companions.

(8.) If you put them out, place them with religious masters.

(9.) To help their proficiency, teach them to read and write.

Digitized by Google

(10.) Commend and make much of them for well-doing.

(11.) Countenance not their shrewd tricks, no — not with a smile. Sin is no laughing matter.

(12.) Counsel, exhort, and warn them *often*.

(13.) Keep them from idleness,— inure them to diligence in a particular calling.

2dly. Train them up in good manners; teaching them,

1. In speech,

To call their betters by reverend and honorable names.

To speak modestly of themselves.

To salute not only their acquaintance, but all Christians, wishing them well.

To be thankful for benefits received.

To acknowledge an offence, craving pardon.

To give their betters leave to speak before them.

To keep silence, while their betters are in place, till they be called to speak, or have asked and obtained leave to speak.

Not to be loud, nor full of words, when they do speak.

Not to interrupt others in speaking, but to give an intercourse of speech to others. He that will have all the talk to himself, passeth the bounds of good manners.

2. In gesture,

To meet such as are coming toward them. Gen., xviii. 2.

To rise up to their elders.

To stand, while their betters are sitting in place. Gen., xviii. 8.

To bend the knee in token of humility or subjection. 1 Kings, ii. 19.

To give the chief place to betters, and offer it in courtesy to equals.

To uncover the head.

A. *Helps* to good education.

1. Suffer them not to have their own will. Prov., xxix. 15.

2. Moderation in diet; not to pamper them with too much, or too delicate.

3. Not to clothe them with costly apparel, or attire them with new fashions. Zeph., i. 8.

4. Rebuke them, when they do amiss.

5. Correct them.

B. *Hindrances* of good education.

Parents' ignorance; — profaneness; — niggardice; — cockering.

Seventh Rule. Go before them in a good example. Instructions without example are a dead doctrine.

Eighth Rule. By all means maintain love among children. As a means,

Shun partiality.

Use equality in ordinary usage; — in distribution of goods.

Ninth Rule. To provide beforehand for their after comfort, when they come to get up families of their own.

1. Learn them some honest calling, mechanical or liberal, which they are most apt for.

2. To give them portions according to your ability; and to that end to lay up something for them.

Digitized by Google

3. To give the eldest son a double portion, nor lightly to disinherit him.

4. To provide godly and suitable matches for them.

5. For compulsion, parents may not choose whether children shall marry or not; or with whom, against their liking; thus turning their authority into tyranny, that their own will should stand for a law in this business.

To this singularly and admirably condensed exhibition of the whole circle of parental duties, we would add a few brief comments. There are several words, which have become obsolete, or have changed their meaning, during the lapse of time. But it is hardly necessary to explain that "cockering" corresponds to our term *petting;* and "shrewd" to *roguish.* The creed referred to, under the sixth rule, is that which is called, not from its authors, but its doctrines, the "Apostles' Creed;" and which is always printed with the Shorter Catechism in the New England Primer. It will be noticed that the examples of good manners, under the same rule, are taken from the behavior of Abraham, that noble oriental prince, and of Solomon, that splendid king. The much admired "gentlemen of the old school" learned their exquisite and dignified politeness from the Old Testament. In the matter of genuflection, children, no matter how old, were wont to bend the knee for a parental blessing. Thus the father of Dr. Tillotson was a strict Puritan and dissenter, and like the patriarch Jacob, "a plain man." Dr. Tillotson was once coming out of his palace at Lambeth, when he was Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of all England, and saw his menials resisting the entrance of a very home-spun but resolute intruder. The prelate astonished all his lacqueys, by running up and falling on his knees before the old man, to crave the parental blessing. The third precept, under the last rule, accords with the law of primogeniture, which was then the custom of the Colonies, as well as of the mother country. The series of rules does not leave off, till the child is fairly married, (if possible, within his own social rank or *status,*) and so passes from under parental charge by becoming the head of a new family of his own. Thus were trained the men who achieved the independence of our country.

Digitized by Google

MISQUOTATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

If infidels were to collect and to burn every copy of the Holy Scriptures, and were to melt all the stereotype plates of them, the entire books might be reproduced from quotations of the same in the literature of our own period and of other times. If a question arose about the correct reading of any passage, it would be decided by an examination of the various authors in whose works it appeared.

But God has superceded the necessity for such labor. He has given us the Bible, and has preserved its purity with the most wonderful care. We may test the accuracy of our version, and of the received text, by a comparison of it with other versions, and with ancient manuscripts. So remarkable is this accuracy, that we may appropriate to the Bible what the Saviour says of the law, not one "jot," the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, or "tittle," the minutest point or accent of the same, has failed; and the preservation, under God, results from the care with which it has been used.

In old time, the scribes were proverbial for accuracy in transcription; and in our own period, the multiplication of versions and copies precludes any important corruptions of the sacred Volume. The action of the public mind which secures this desirable object is very remarkable. A new edition of the Bible is issued, and but one word is altered. *Immerse* is substituted for "baptize." The voice of the religious world remonstrates, and the edition dies upon the publisher's hands.

Yet some of the very men who are so anxious to preserve the Holy Scriptures from all corruption, do not always quote them with accuracy. Nor is this the fault of laymen only. We lately read a published sermon, from no inconsiderable author and preacher, in which there were not less than thirty-three misquotations of the Word of God. We do not here refer to allusions and quotations *ad sensum*, both of which the example of the inspired writers themselves authorizes; but we refer to cases in which the veritable words of God purport to be given,—to quotations which are professedly *verbatim et literatim*.

Digitized by Google

Of these misquotations we will give a few examples, from the multitude which we have collected from various sources. Neither Solomon, nor any other inspired writer, ever gave us the proverb often ascribed to him, "Honesty is the best policy." Not many months ago, a public journal reported a sermon from this text: "And *Moses* danced before the Lord with all his might," ascribing to the Jewish lawgiver what the Bible asserts of David.

It is not very uncommon to hear Timothy, Silas, and others, erroneously called apostles. During a recent session of Congress, a representative spoke of Saul of Tarsus as "head and shoulders above his brethren;" a description like that which the Bible gives of Saul, king of Israel, but exceedingly inappropriate to Saul of Tarsus, of whom the Bible says, "his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible;" and of whom history says that he was of low stature and crooked, with bald head and stammering tongue.

"God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," is not from Solomon, but from Sterne. "In the midst of life we are in death," is not from the Bible, but from the Common Prayer. We search the New Testament in vain for the words: "Bread and wine hath the Lord commanded to be received." They are from the Church of England Catechism.

How often these passages are quoted as from the Holy Scriptures: "A merciful man is merciful to his beast;"—"Be not wise above what is written;"—"A nation shall be born in a day;" none of which can be found in the Bible.

A corresponding error is quite common in respect to Scriptural words and phrases. One example must suffice. We sometimes hear Christians beseech God to be *reconciled*. This, besides being incorrect and unscriptural language, is bad theology. The irreconciliation is ours. We read: "God was in Christ, *reconciling the world* unto himself." We were in rebellion, and must be reconciled to him, not he to us!

These examples are sufficient to illustrate the importance of a critical study of the Scriptures, of care in the use of them, and of accuracy in quoting them; lessons which ministers should teach their people, Sabbath school teachers their scholars, and parents their children, both by precept and example.

Digitized by Google

REVIEW.

THE SECOND ADVENT: Or what do the Scriptures teach respecting the Second Coming of Christ, the End of the World, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgment? By Alpheus Crosby. Boston: 1850.

PROFESSOR CROSBY is the victim of a system, which has taken him captive, and carries him whithersoever it will. He follows it wherever he can see it; and when it gets beyond his sight, he shuts his eyes, and still pursues it by the scent and the sound of its flying foot-steps. His theory is, that "the second coming of Christ, with its associate events, the end of the world, the resurrection of the dead, and the general judgment, must have already taken place," (namely, at the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus;) "and all expectation of these events as still future is forbidden by the Scriptures." How these sublime events, and all the awful predictions in the Bible respecting them, came to pass at that time, he does not pretend to explain. But his system requires him to say that it is so; and bravely he says it. And if the exigencies of his system had required him to say, that all the declarations of the New Testament respecting the heavenly blessedness of righteous souls were fulfilled in the rejoicings of the whole Christian Church at the sack of Zion, he would not want courage to make the affirmation.

Indeed, it is perfectly clear, that many of the expressions which have ever been understood as descriptive of heavenly happiness, must be oddly interpreted by Professor Crosby. Thus, the parable of the sheep and goats, if it had its final and complete fulfilment at the destruction of Jerusalem, must teach that the righteous, as the "blessed of the Father, inherited" at that time, "the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world." It is certainly very singular that, while there has been preserved such ample record of the unequalled woes which then fell upon the Jewish nation,— woes which made that political tragedy a fitting image of the destruction of the wicked at the last day,— history is totally silent as to any remarkable felicity then enjoyed by the per-

Digitized by Google

secuted people of the Lord. There is nothing in the circumstance of Zion's devastation, which would lead us to suppose that the saints then exulted in it to such an incredible degree as to "enter into the joy of their Lord," at the sight or the tidings of those cruel sorrows, in the anticipation of which Jesus wept on the mount of Olives. But no matter! Mr. Crosby's theory requires him to believe and print such absurdities and impossibilities; and the inexorable theory must be obeyed.

This imperious theory, in audacity of interpretation, goes far beyond what we used to call ultra-Universalism. That scheme of belief, corrupt and foolish as it is, never ventured so far as Professor Crosby has done in this matter; and even now, its older advocates have publicly expressed their dissent from his sweeping conclusions. The passages relating to the Second Advent, and to the general resurrection and judgment, and to the eternal state of all mankind, are so numerous, amounting to many hundreds, as to form a very large proportion of the New Testament. If all these have now no prospective interest, but were long since fulfilled, how much is taken away from the value of the Book which contains them. It loses at once a vast proportion of its utility as a motive to holy action and a life of prayer.

And what shall we say of the stupidity of Christendom? If all these stirring declarations of our Lord and his apostles were receiving their fulfilment at the ruin of Jerusalem, as Mr. Crosby says, "*in the precise sense*" which was contemplated when they were uttered,—in "the very *highest*, *noblest*, *heavenliest* sense of which those words are susceptible,"—how came it to pass, that the entire Christian community, then exulting in the redemption of most of the exceeding great and precious promises it had received, either had not the sense to be aware of its happiness, or felt it so slightly as to leave no record of it for them that should come after? It is considered to be essential to the character of a true prediction, that, however obscure previous to its accomplishment, it should be unmistakably explained by the event. But the dull Christian world, which, with all its dullness, has had to itself by far the greater part of the intel-

Digitized by Google

ligence of all ages, past and present, has never been aware of this wholesale fulfilment of what were true predictions when first uttered, though the fact of Jerusalem's destruction has been no secret. Christendom, however, will be apt to retort this implied charge of dullness upon the author of this new theory, so long as he shall fail to point out some tolerably natural sense, figurative as it must be, in which the conditions of every one of those predictions are satisfied by that theory. This task, as we shall presently shew in few words, he will never be able to perform.

Let us first recur, for a moment, to the diminished utility of the Scriptures on Mr. Crosby's one-idea system of interpretation. If all those passages relating to the later coming of Christ, in every sense of that phrase, together with all that is said of the end of the world and its final conflagration, and all that is said of the resurrection of the dead, small and great, and buried in sea or land, as also the general judgment of all mankind by Jesus Christ, and the consequent adjudged states of eternal happiness to the righteous and eternal damnation to the wicked; — if all these passages referred exclusively to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and were then and there fulfilled,— then the gospel reveals to us nothing beyond the grave, promises no future state of conscious existence, and brings no vision of life and immortality to light. The ex-professor seriously argues, that "there are no warnings to PREPARE for *death*," "no precepts to WATCH with reference to *death*," "no promise to believers of REST *at death*," and that "it is never urged as a motive to REPENTANCE that *death* is near," that "it is never presented as a motive to sobriety and prayerfulness, that the *end of life* is at hand;" and that these things are mentioned only in connection with the ruin of Jerusalem. If these things are so, what moral influence is the New Testament to exert in making us holy and penitent, at this distant day? The desolation of Zion was indeed a terrible example of divine vengeance; but what is it to us more than the devastation of Nineveh and Babylon, of the cities of the plain, or of the ante-diluvian world? Will it be pretended that we can live the life of faith as well in reference to a historic past which is seen, as in reference

Digitized by Google

to a prophetic future which is unseen, but no less certain? Shall we find the remembrance of that dread hour when the city of David was laid in heaps, smoking with the invaders' fires, and steaming with the blood of its defenders, to be as strong an incentive to a life of self-denial, of indifference to the world, and of communion with heavenly things, as is found in the common belief as to the "last things" of earth? Or shall we not find, on the trial of Mr. Crosby's new scheme of interpretation, that the gospel has died out, and suffered the loss of all its primitive power to sanctify and save?

Christian interpreters have usually understood the *second* coming of Christ, as distinguished from his *first* coming at Bethlehem, to be his promised return to the world at the final consummation of its affairs. But the expression, *coming of Christ*, when not numerically distinguished, they have understood not only of one or the other of those events; but also, in many instances, of the actual destruction of Jerusalem; of Christ's coming to his disciples for the purpose of spiritual communion and indwelling, (John xiv. 23. Rev. 3: 20;) of his coming at the death of an individual, who is thus instantly ushered into Christ's presence; of his coming in special acts of judgment on backsliding churches, (Rev. ii. 5;) of his spiritual coming, or reign of grace over the nations of the earth, at the millennium; and finally of his coming for the judgment of all men at the end of the world. Which of these events may be designed in any particular passage, must be determined by examining it in its connections.

Mr. Crosby's book did not allow him space to develope all that he would have offered in defence of his scheme; and much less will our brief pages suffer us to expose so much as a hundredth part of the absurdities in which it is involved. Out of a vast collection of passages before us, each of which is sufficient to explode it, we will offer a few of such as first present themselves, and which are incapable of any rational explanation on his plan.

Let us begin with passages in which the coming of Christ is spoken of *as limiting the time* when various duties will be of binding force, and various promised blessings may be expected. The Apostle Paul, speaking of the celebration of

Digitized by Google

the eucharist, says: "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come." According to Professor Crosby's view, there has been no authority for observing the Lord's Supper since the ruin of Jerusalem. The institution was for a limited time, and expired when that time arrived. He can never go to the Lord's table without as great a piece of mistimed devotion as if he were to go to Jerusalem to eat the passover, and to offer young pigeons or turtle-doves in sacrifice.

Our Saviour promised his disciples, saying: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." But, by Mr. Crosby's book, the disciples can have enjoyed none of the special presence of Christ in their evangelical labors, since Jerusalem was laid waste.

Paul, in writing to the severely persecuted Thessalonian Christians, promises them *rest with himself* from all their troubles, when the Lord "shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." What day? The day of Jerusalem's overthrow! But before that, the apostle himself, and most of those he was attempting to console, were resting in their graves. And as to the survivors, what consolation or what cessation from persecution could they have derived from the ruin of a remote city, of which they probably knew nothing till many weeks after it occurred. That Christ then took signal vengeance on many of them that "obeyed not the gospel," cannot be doubted. But what special manifestation was there, at that time, of his glory in the saints?

Our Lord, when speaking of his approaching departure, said to his disciples: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again*, and receive you unto myself." When Jerusalem fell beneath the swords and fire-brands of Rome, did our Saviour come, and take the whole college of apostles bodily, with himself, into heaven, or any other prepared place?

Hear the prayer of the crucified thief: "Lord, remember me, when thou comest in thy kingdom." Think you that this petition had the slightest reference to the final downfall of the Jewish polity?

Digitized by Google

When our Lord asked that remarkable question: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" — is it credible that he looked forward to the time of Jerusalem's catastrophe, as a season to be peculiarly marked by the disappearance of faith from the earth? And was there such a disappearance at that time? Or did the saints, on the contrary, then lift up their rejoicing heads, because the day of their redemption had come? Or, did neither of these phenomena then appear?

Take that noted passage: "Then cometh the end, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." What can be more preposterous than the notion, that the disastrous fate of Jerusalem was the signal for the Messiah to lay down his mediatorial kingdom? Or that the moral condition of the world at that period corresponded with the assurance that Jesus should then be reigning in universal and acknowledged supremacy?

Where is the sense of the questions which the apostle asked of his converts: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" When Zion fell, the apostle had been for years rejoicing in the crown of martyrdom; but surely he was at that time altogether disappointed as to this other crown which Mr. Crosby thinks he was so confidently expecting.

And so, when praying for these same spiritual children, he asked that their "whole spirit, soul, and body, might be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Can it be supposed that he thought their innocence would be safe from corruption when Jerusalem should be no more? Why pray that they may be kept blameless till then, and no longer?

The same apostle, in his charge to Timothy to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life, enjoins him to "keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ." Why this strange

Digitized by Google

limitation of his faithful obedience to the time of the subversion of the Jewish national state? What conceivable relation can there be between such duties and the event which is supposed by Professor Crosby to limit their performance?

Consider the direction given to the Church at Corinth, to excommunicate an incestuous member, "delivering such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Had the destroying of Jerusalem any tendency to bring such persons to repentance? And now that Jerusalem has long been destroyed, can ex-communications be of any avail?

Were the fallen angels, and Sodom and Gomorrah, which, as the Scriptures teach, were reserved for final doom at the day of judgment, subjected to the full execution of their sentence while Jerusalem was wrapped in flames?

We might fill scores of pages with just such quotations and queries, all equally irreconcilable with Professor Crosby's theory, as are these passages, taken as they happened to come up. That theory will necessitate in him who maintains it a reconstruction of the entire New Testament, and of the whole plan of salvation. We wonder not that our author stopped short in his work. We only marvel that he should have sent out such a crude conception into the world.

On reading over his first four "propositions," we were profoundly affected at the blindness which let in many texts into his lists, most fatal to the point they were adduced to sustain; and at the prejudice which winked out others, which it would not do so much as to look at in such a connection. But when he comes to his "fifth proposition," which ought to have been most labored of all, he dismisses it in half of a duodecimo page. And the sixth and last proposition is despatched with a brevity equally astonishing. On the strength of an undigested jumble of assertions, he expects his readers to be converted to the belief, that "the Second Coming of Christ, with its associate events, the End of the World, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the General Judgment, must have already taken place; and all expectation of these events as still future is forbidden by the Scriptures," — "and must be explained in a figurative or spiritual, rather than

Digitized by Google

a literal sense, and in such a sense as admits an application to what has already taken place."

These are the redoubtable fifth and sixth propositions, announced without a line of argument, or word of proof. When we found that we had got to the end, before we were half way to the middle of the discussion, we fairly rubbed our eyes, thinking that we must be laboring under an optical illusion. But it is no illusion! The author leads us into the wilderness, and leaves us there, merely indicating to us the general direction in which he supposes the proper field of inquiry to lie. His book is like one of those alleys hedged on either side with thorns, which used to be common in the old-fashioned landscape-gardening of England, and which led on the unsuspecting visiter, till, at a sudden turn, he found himself just stepping into a ditch, or running plump against a stone-wall. These walks were called "haw-haws;" a name which, (with all deference to the etymologists,) was probably derived from the bursts of derisive laughter which assailed the astonished stroller. Mr. Crosby's book is a complete "haw-haw," and nothing but the solemnity of the topics of which it treats can exempt it from merited ridicule.

Though he could not find time or room to argue out the main point in his theory, he could reserve a space exceeding one-third of the volume for an Appendix, devoted to the perpetration of a very vile trick of authorcraft. Well knowing that he could father his new-born and illegimate theory on no writer more respectable than himself, he compiles this "appendix of extracts relating to Biblical interpretation," in some of which he does not profess to believe himself. Here we have long quotations from John Robinson, Dr. Woods, Professors Park, Stuart, Stowe, and Robinson, Drs. Lightfoot, Gill, Clark, Watts, and Macknight, and Messrs. Barnes, and Bouton, and others; — *not one of whom* agrees in the general views of Mr. Crosby, and most of whose writings here copied have no particular reference to the subject in hand. It is inconceivable that all these worthies should be dragged into this appendix, for any other purpose than to produce a deceptive appearance of orthodox sanction for our author's heterodox notions.

Digitized by Google

MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CORPORATIONS.

In the day of judgment, every sin will find an owner. There are now, many stray sins abroad, some of them of no small magnitude nor measured malignity, for which no owner can be found. There are many things whose wrong is universally confessed; for which no one is willing to be held responsible. Yet every sin necessarily implies one or more perpetrators, each of whom must be liable to appropriate penalties under any system of moral government which recognizes universal obligation and individual responsibility.

Many evasions have been devised to enable men to throw off from their consciences the weight of accountability for evils in which they are involved. Some have used the phrase *organic sin*, as descriptive of sin so woven into the fabric of society, that the several members are not held to answer for its existence or removal. If there are any such sins, it is obvious that there must be an organic repentance bringing forth fruits meet for repentance; or else they must be organically condemned and punished. This organic theory seems to be only a scientific statement of the common saying: "What is every body's business is no body's." This saying is one of the greatest falsities in morals ever uttered. It is a solemn truth, that what is every body's business, *is* every body's business; and every body must attend to his particular portion of it, or suffer for his neglect in proportion to his share of the delinquency. The repetition of that falsity has done much to generate a deplorable apathy in regard to prevailing evils. It has prevented men from feeling that they must be involved in a common condemnation with all who are implicated in those evils, unless the hands be purged, and the skirts of the garments cleansed, with scrupulous care, from every spot of defilement.

So, too, we hear of corporate sins. These are often so enormous, so hard to reach with reforming influences, and so little conscience is felt about them in any bosom, that it sometimes seems that corporations must be a contrivance of Satan for producing sin without any sinners. The number

Digitized by Google

of these sins which can find no owners at present, is as the number of the sands on the sea-shore; but, beyond all doubt, in the judgment of the great day, every one of them will be traced home to responsible authors. It is true, that the principle on which corporations are formed may be good. They may be formed for lawful purposes, and conducted unexceptionably. But they are perilously liable to abuse. It cannot be denied, that many things are done by corporations, which no one member would do under any temptation on his own account. Hence the reproachful stigma cast upon them is often deserved; and it becomes a proverb, that "corporations have neither bodies to be kicked, nor souls to be saved." But is it credible that the colossal crimes and wholesale iniquity produced by them will always remain anonymous? No; all this culpability is charged in the "books of remembrance" to the real perpetrators; and when those books are "opened," each perpetrator will be inwardly forced to plead guilty to the charges against him.

As an example of the sins we are now considering, we may advert to the violations of the Sabbath committed by many rail-road companies, by numerous manufacturing corporations, and by the post-office establishment. It is hard to conceive of a more unpuritanical thing, than "sunday-trains" rattling and roaring over New England soil. It is as glaring a violation of the "fitness of things," as great an outrage on "artistic justice," as if a painter were to depict the daughter of Herodias twirling in a waltz with John the Baptist. But the execrable taste of the thing is a mere trifle in comparison with the popish and Swedenborgian impiety which petitions for such abominations, in order to gratify those who wish to thunder up to their church-doors in eight-wheeled cars, heralded by the melody of the engineer's bell and steam-whistle. It seems that there is no telling who is to blame for this mechanical plan for running over and trampling down the Sabbath, under the hypocritical pretence of furnishing facilities for Sabbath observance. But when these corporate culprits shall stand at the bar of Heaven, the finger of an unerring accuser will point them out to shame and everlasting contempt.

Digitized by Google

There are other transgressions, at present impalpable, connected with manufacturing companies, where the toil of production ceases on the weekly feast-day of our Lord's resurrection; but where the repair-shops are in full blast, to get the machinery in trim for Monday morning's operations. How scandalous it would be, in private life, if men were thus to turn the day of rest into a wearisome preparation for the days of toil! Such men would be regarded as semi-barbarous and pagan. But what is heathenish in a man, is heathenish in a chartered company, whose stockholders are amenable to the ten commandments, both in their corporate and their personal capacities.

The transportation of the mails on the Sabbath, in which unholy work a vast amount of service is done, is another instance where the human conscience runs out and loses itself in the dry gravel of impersonal association. And yet, in a country like this, where every voter is a stock-holder in the huge political corporation, where the entire body politic is one automaton, and where the citizens claim to be the first sources of the sovereign power, — in such a country, it would seem that no man could regard himself as free from the offence of sunday-mails, till by petition, vote, and all other means of reaching at the wrong, he had turned the whole weight of his personal influence against it, and thus washed his hands in innocency.

Another capital fault, and it is "an evil among all things that are done under the sun," is committed by such corporations as "oppress the hireling in his wages." It may be difficult to adjust the relations of capital and labor upon equal terms, so that there may be a fair distribution of profits between them. That "the lion's share of the prey" should fall to the capitalist, rather than to the laborer, is probably right; for the capitalist incurs a greater proportion of risk, is more uncertain of returns, and must bring to the business a higher degree of experience and capacity. Moreover, it is desirable that capital should be well remunerated, as an encouragement to invest it in enterprises which give employment to multitudes, and add to the general wealth and prosperity of the people. And more than this, it is desirable that

Digitized by Google

capital should have the best of the bargain, in order that the laborer, instead of being content with his lot, may be stirred up to such industry and economy as will raise him to a place among the capitalists; or rather among that more valuable class who labor on capital of their own.

But when the "money power" grasps the entire profits above the cost of materials and the barest subsistence of the laborer, it becomes unjust. It takes advantage of its opportunity to dictate the terms of employment, till the operative is reduced to helpless dependence, and despairs of ever bettering his lot. Such poverty as takes away the heart and strength of manhood is demoralizing, and becomes fruitful of crime. It is slavery, mocked with the name of freedom; — slavery, without its poor privilege of being cared for in age and sickness. Such seems to be the state of things in England, whose enormous wealth, instead of fostering the thrift of the poor, is ever swelling its overgrown power by reducing them to yet deeper and more squalid misery, to a feudalism of most ignoble kind.

So far as anything of the kind is done by corporate wealth among us, it is a sore evil; and it exists in all those parts of our common country, where the plantation system of agriculture prevails. In the slave States, capital takes all, except what may barely suffice to keep the mass of its laborers alive and in working plight; and this is the settled system of the land. Like every unjust system, it is fraught with evil to all concerned. Morals are depreciated, riches are consequently corrupted, "gold and silver is cankered," and at last even the odious privilege of oppression loses its worldly value. And yet men who acknowledge the evil nature and working of such political arrangements, are not able to see who is to blame for them, except it be the dead, and an uncertain character who figures largely in the discussion of such matters, under the name of the *Public*. All such sins are piled up at the door of his invisible dwelling, or laid on his irresponsible head. He is made the object of loud, and ceaseless, and ineffective complaints. No deputy-sheriff can serve a writ upon him, no avenging angel smite his shadowy and impalpable existence. A prodigious amount of "moral

Digitized by Google

courage" is vented in roundly railing at him; but he is "possessed with a devil, blind and dumb," and will neither see his guilt nor reply to his accusers. Meanwhile, each moral nuisance remains unabated; and sin is multiplied; and no man is to blame.

But let us not be deceived with the imagination, that these stray sins will never be brought home to their real owners.

> "'Tis the eternal law, that where sin is
> Sorrow shall answer it."

There is a judgment-seat, where "every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompense of reward." When Israel, after the conquest of Jericho, partook of the accursed thing, none knew on whom to lay the offence which filled the camp with dismay. But He with whom is "the disposal of the lot," brought the discovery of the criminal, step by step, to the wretched Achan. Thus will it be, in the day of divine inquisition, with all those nameless iniquities which have troubled Israel, or polluted the world.

It, therefore, is requisite in all members of corporate societies to see that the principles of Christian morality are as strictly maintained in them, as they are expected to be in the private life of a virtuous individual. Else such members may be deeply involved in other men's sins; and by sharing in "the wages of unrighteousness," may contract stains of guilt which shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever.

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

THE ORTHODOX POSITION. — At the great rupture between the Orthodox and Unitarians, in 1815, when the latter threw off the mask of concealment, the former adopted the policy of non-communion, as to all religious offices which could imply a recognition of Unitarianism. The Orthodox boldly declared, that the opposing systems were not two variously modified Christianities; that only one of them, in the nature of things, could properly be called Christian; and that, therefore, all acts of ministerial or ecclesiastical intercourse between them must be inconsistent with true faith and allegiance to Christ and his kingdom. Much as the Unitarians then boasted of their over-

Digitized by Google

whelming superiority in civic and literary influence, and haughtily as they bore themselves toward the despised friends of evangelical truth, they keenly felt this solemn and practical protestation against their defections from the gospel. Amid tempests of abuse from them, the Orthodox persisted in that line of procedure which their consciences dictated; and it was carried out with surprising thoroughness, considering how intimately mixed were the respective parties in the relations of social life. Under the auspices of the late Dr. Codman of Dorchester, of the distinguished Professors at Andover, of Dr. Lyman Beecher, and Dr. Wisner in Boston, and many others, the Orthodox have successfully sustained their position to this day.

On a careful review, we are fully satisfied that our position is right and Scriptural. From the time it was decidedly taken, the defections from Orthodoxy, which had been so frequent and distressing, became rare and unimportant. On the other hand, our churches "were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." Religion has been greatly revived; and so many who were once Unitarians have embraced the gospel, that almost all our churches reckon some of them among their firmest pillars. It is, as we suppose, the universal belief of Orthodox men among us, that Unitarianism is relatively losing ground, and that the balance of power is steadily turning in favor of the ancient religion of the land. A system whose operation is so well settled, and which works so favorably for the truth and for the salvation of men, ought not to be too readily disturbed or modified.

Of late, however, it seems that certain brethren, who are in various sorts of sympathy with Dr. Bushnell, are in favor of some change, which, as they fancy, will bring us and the Unitarians nearer together. In their attempts to bring about such a result, they have seemed very much like a man on slippery ground pulling at a rope made fast to an old stump; and boasting that the longer he pulls, the nearer he finds the stump. Of course, the Unitarians admire this operation, and encourage with flattering words these wonder-working proselyters, who flatter them back again with as little taste as judgment. But, for our part, we have no ambition for numbering up nominal converts to a defunct or a disabled Orthodoxy. The Unitarians may as well remain what they are, unless they shall be converted to the love and life of the truth in Christ. For the effecting of this blessed consummation, we know of no means but the truth in its purity, and of no agency but the grace of God. To tell them that they are nearly right already, is to make them self-contented, and to confirm them in fatal error. We can only increase the motive-power of truth over their minds, by convincing them *how far they are from it*. The more distinctively we hold up the truth to their view, the more shall we induce them to come over to it, provided our practice be in harmony with our professions, and our treatment of them in all personal relations be frank and kind.

THE SABBATH IN GERMANY. — It is notorious that the Christian Sabbath has long been sadly desecrated in Germany; and that many whom we are accustomed to regard as among the best men there, have

Digitized by Google

spoken contemptuously of the stricter Sabbath-keeping in England, Scotland, and America, describing it as a crabbed Judaism, or more crabbed Puritanism. But it seems that now, at this late hour, some of them have discovered their deplorable mistake; and are ascribing the infidel feeling and political unsteadiness of the masses of their people, to the want of the sweet influences of the day of rest. From amid the storms and wrecks of their fruitless revolutions, they look wistfully at the profound peace of Great Britain and America. They ask why it is that the Germans, a kindred race, cannot keep up the Anglo-Saxon policy, in which law and liberty meet together, and order and freedom reign with harmonious sway. One Wichern, to whose interesting book on Home Missions in Germany we have seen some allusions in the "Kirchenfreund," is very explicit upon this point. So also is a German correspondent of the last named publication, from whom we translate a few sentences. In proof that the restoration of the sanctity of God s holy day can alone restore quiet to his distracted nation, he says: "We have only to represent to ourselves what form human life assumes in the absence of the Sabbath, and we may see how that life will gradually sink into spiritual and bodily misery. The man who has no Sabbath, but year in and year out, Sunday and every day, bears the yoke of worldly toil, loses at last the feeling that he is a man, and was made for something higher. Let us glance at the domestic life from which the Sabbath has disappeared. The family was designed of God to be the nursery for the first tender germs of virtue, — for love, obedience, confidence, constancy, rectitude and integrity. The *family* should fit men for the *State*. But the family which has no Sabbath, has lost its home-altar, its sacredness is fled, its foundations are shattered; and such a family is a family no more. For how can that be a family, where the parents, not on week-days only, but on Sunday also, leave their dwellings in the morning, and return not to them and their children till late in the evening; where the parents belong not to the children, nor the children to the parents; and where the reciprocity of affection has sunk to nullity?" From these Sabbathless families, proceed citizens who would fill up their restless and joyless lives with sensual pleasures; and who, deprived of due repose and refreshment, regard labor as a pain with which the great part of mankind is tormented. They have no feeling of loyalty or patriotism. The desecration of the Sabbath has gone so far as to proclaim Germany a godless State, — *l'état athée*. If the Word of the Lord is a strong tower, the day of the Lord is a brazen wall around that tower, to defend it from the raging floods of ungodliness. This writer earnestly implores his countrymen to make a united effort to restore the sanctification of the Sabbath, as the only effective means of restoring the domestic life of the nation, and its political quiet and security. Would that this example might not be lost on those, who are doing what in them lies to destroy what respect for the Sabbath yet remains among us in New England.

LATTER-DAY PAMPHLETS. — Nothing of the Mormon here! — no Joe Smith utterances, and "Latter-day Saint" vaticinations from

Digitized by Google

Deseret. These be, rather, sybilline leaves torn from the heart-tablets of the mightiest of hero-men, — the flashing, the coruscating, the exploding Thomas Carlyle, — man of mouth-mystery, lip-lingo, voice-verbiage, — with ideas marching in grim and grotesque procession, on stilts, on their heads, on all-fours, on broomsticks, on donkeys mincing out of pure contrariness tail foremost, railing on rails, rolling on swollen bladders inflated with pseudo-German gas, — shouting, spouting, growling, and grumbling;

> "So have we heard ten cats in stormy weather,
> Squeak, squeal, squall, squabble, screech and scream together."

l'amphlet "Number One," is on "the Present Time;" — not the *past*, — that goblin ghost of defunct inanity, gibbering among broken tomb-stones, and eating from coffin-plates on mouldy boards; — not the *future*, — that non-entity, which when it comes out of the womb of nothingness, is no more itself, or any self; — but the *present*, aye, the present, the glorious, phantasmagoric, aguish, double-jointed, volcano-brooding, thunder-belching, earthquake-gendering, blatant and flatulent present! This is the magic theme of Carlylianistic ponderings and sage spasms of ulterior humanity, big with the bursting bombs of intellectuality, revelling in floods of fool-goosery and muds of disguised and bedizened duncery.

With what illuminated 'cuteness doth he paint the social state of American boredom, as "Anarchy *plus* a street-constable!" and democracy as demonocracy in a demon-strative devel-opement. But even this is Miltonically grand and Satanically noble, as compared with the crazy monarchies and cracky aristocracies of poor old tumble-down Europe. Hear the oracle himself! "If the thing called Government merely drift to and fro, no whither, on the popular vortexes, like some carcass of a drowned ass, constitutionally put 'at the top of affairs,' popular indignation will infallibly accumulate upon it: one day, the popular lightning, descending forked and horrible from the black air, will annihilate said supreme carcass, and smite it home to its native ooze again!" Page 37. Hah! sayst thou me, Nuncle Tommy! "Annihilate said supreme carcass," and "smite it home" after it is annihilated! Say, shall it verify the prayer of the confessant at the camp-meeting, who would fain have been "annihilated into a toad"? And in what Dutch college, beery and tobacconalian, didst thou learn that "carcasses of drowned asses" are "natives" of the "ooze" which is their "home"? Lucid politician! Lurid legislator! And what is thy patent remedy for the ragged misery of England's millions of paupers and "Captainless vagrants"? Wouldst thou enslave them for their good? Wouldst thou in very deed say to each of them: "Here is work for you! — Refuse to strike into it; shirk the heavy labor; disobey the rules — I will admonish and endeavor to incite you; if in vain, I will flog you; if still in vain, I will at last shoot you, and make God's Earth, and the forlorn hope in God's Battle, free of you"? Page 45. Somewhat atrocious philanthropy this! yea, rather truculent, thou dark-souled pepper-pot, thou ascetic vinegar-cruet, on the dinner-table of modern literature! Out upon thee! We have done with

Digitized by Google

thee. We have caulked thy hull with thine own oakum. We have paid it with thine own pitch-mop. And now we push thy craft adrift. Avaunt! Scull! Paddle! Claw off! Get thee out of arrow-shot from thine own bow! Drift out of sight, and leave not a wake behind!

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. — We have been much interested in a recent perusal of a work on the origin and structure of the English language, by Rev. Matthew Harrison, of the established Church of England. He has greatly enlarged our admiration of the power and flexibility of our Saxon speech, so strikingly proved in the very lines which Byron wrote, to flout it in comparison with the mellifluous Italian.

"I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,
Which melts, like kisses, in a female mouth,
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,
With syllables that breathe of the sweet south,
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,
That not a single accent seems uncouth,
Like our harsh, northern, whistling, grunting gutteral,
Which we are forced to hiss, and spit, and sputter all."

"This very stanza alone," says Mr. Harrison, "is enough to rescue the English language from the charge his lordship has endeavored to fix upon it. If it is expressive of harshness in one part, it is equally expressive of gentleness in another. The first five lines are full of liquids, the gentlest of all sounds. The 'gentle liquids gliding,' and the repetition of *th* in 'breathe of the sweet south,' are soft and beautifully descriptive. The smoothness and softness of the words exactly represent the poet's meaning. When we come to the word *uncouth*, and the two following lines, Lord Byron would have looked in vain to the 'sweet south' for terms so applicable to the purpose which he had in view, as the terms *harsh*, *northern*, *whistling*, etc." This felicitous criticism well illustrates the compass and flexibility of the English speech, which is adapted to the expression of every emotion, and to the translation of every foreign tongue.

The greater part of Mr. Harrison's book is taken up with grammatical criticisms of a very valuable character. It is astonishing how much bad grammar is written by the most distinguished literary men. Our attention was first called to this fact by reading the Grammar of William Cobbett, — a man so well depicted by Coleridge as a "political rhinoceros, with his coat armor of dry and wet mud, and his one horn of brutal strength on the nose of scorn and hate, not to forget the flaying rasp of his tongue." Cobbett takes a malicious pleasure in filling scores of pages with grammatical peccadilloes committed by Addison and Dr. Johnson. Editors and proof-readers, who have special occasion to notice these niceties, are constantly marvelling at the inaccuracies of the ablest writers, who pass under professional review.

HISTORY OF SABBATH-SCHOOLS. — There is a pamphlet circulated by the American Sunday School Union of Philadelphia, which purports to be a "Popular Sketch of the Rise and Progress of Sun-

Digitized by Google

day-Schools in the United States." Such a title would naturally attract the attention of any person desirous of obtaining, in small space, information on the whole subject announced. But all such seekers will be disappointed, on finding that the pamphlet is exclusively devoted to the history and proceedings of the "Union" from whom it proceeds. The other numerous and important associations for the same purpose are merely alluded to in a passing paragraph, affording no information of importance. The pamphlet is a good one, so far as it goes, and there can be no objection to its publication as a history of the "American Union." But to issue it under such a deceptive title implies either a vast conceit on the part of the lay-directors of the "Union," or a very ungenerous indifference as to the zealous exertions of other laborers in the same field. A *union*, even though it claims to be national, ought to shun every appearance of arrogance or discourtesy which may alienate from it the affections of large bodies of faithful co-workers in the religious instruction of the young. They that profess to be the guides of youthful millions, ought to set the example of justice and respect toward all who are sharing in the same good work. And courtesy, which is so much vaunted of in our day, is far more effectively taught by practice than by precept.

ORDINATIONS.

Jan. 30. Mr. Aretas G. Loomis, Bethlehem, Conn.
Feb. 27. Mr. James M. Hoppin, Crombie St. Ch., Salem, Ms.
" " Mr. George E. Fisher, Rutland, Ms.
" " Mr. John H. Gurney, St. Johnsbury East, Vt.
Mar. 7. Mr. Ebenezer Cutler, St Albans, Vt.
" 13. Mr. William A. Goodrich, Bristol, Conn.

INSTALLATIONS.

Jan. 29. Rev. Joseph R. Whittemore, Holderness Village, N. H.
Feb. 13. Rev. A. Fleming, Brookfield, Vt.
" " Rev. William B. Curtiss, Huntingdon, Conn.
" 20. Rev. Josiah G. Merrill, West Brooksville, Me.
" 28. Rev. Timothy Atkinson, Bridge St. Ch., Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mar. 7. Rev. Francis V. Tenney, Byfield, Ms.
" 13. Rev. Theophilus P. Sawin, Harwich, Ms.

DEATHS OF MINISTERS.

Feb. 6. Rev. Daniel Parker, Brookfield, Vt., æ. 52.
" 9. Rev. Archibald Burgess, Hancock, N. H., æ. 60.
" 27. Rev. W. A. Peabody, Professor, Amherst, Ms., æ. 34.
Mar. 5. Rev. William J. Newman, York, Me., æ. 38.
" 13. Rev. David Long, Hartford, Conn., æ. 78.

Digitized by Google

PROSPECTUS

OF THE

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY

FOR 1850.....VOL. IV.

THE original Editor of this Work, on resuming his former relation to it as its only responsible conductor, wishes to return his warm thanks to those numerous friends who have heretofore aided the work by their communications, or by their personal influence in its behalf. He would especially render his thanks to those brethren, with whom he was united in carrying it on during the past year. He can now, with propriety, testify to the laboriousness, zeal, and punctuality, with which they fulfilled the duty assigned them; and to the gratifying unanimity which has marked all their proceedings, though every variety of theological sentiment recognized among the Orthodox was represented in their number. The present Editor feels that he has derived the most essential and permanent benefit from his intimate association with them through the labors of that year; and is happy in being permitted to rely on their aid and advice, as future occasion may require. It will be his endeavor, that the work shall continue to exhibit, as it has done, the Orthodoxy of New England. Important as may be the points disputed among us as brethren, they are of far less consequence than the grand doctrines of the Cross on which all are substantially agreed, and the opposing errors which on every side rise up against the common faith. Any attempt to array the peaceful and united churches of Massachusetts, or other States, into rival schools or hostile factions, is to be deprecated with the utmost earnestness.

We do not wish to have any more of controversy on our pages than may be necessary for due interest and instruction in the questions of the day. "Heresy hunting" is no part of our business. The tables, in this respect, are turned, and it is heresy which often hunts us. But when it comes rushing at us with open throat, we shall neither fly nor hide. We shall meet it manfully with all suitable weapons, whether of argument, sarcasm, or Scripture.

There will be no change in the general character of THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY from what it was last year, unless it be in the attempt to make it more popular and domestic. Though arrangements have been made for securing valuable assistance, the Editor solicits still further co-operation, (which will not be wholly unrequited,) of those numerous brethren, both among the ministry and laity, whose ready pens and fervent minds are needed to vary and enrich its successive issues. May the Divine blessing attend these efforts to maintain and spread the truth in Christ!

A. W. McCLURE.

Digitized by Google

THE SUBSCRIBERS,—believing that such a work as THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY is needed, that it has hitherto been useful, and is destined to an increasing circulation and influence,—cordially recommend it to the continued confidence and patronage of the evangelical community.

N. ADAMS,
JOHN A. ALBRO,
E. N. KIRK,
W. A. STEARNS,
A. C. THOMPSON.

CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THIS Work will henceforth be issued from the Office of THE PURITAN RECORDER. The two publications, however, will be as distinct as they ever were, each pursuing independently its own appropriate objects, under separate editorial arrangements.

Communications relating to the editorial department, will be addressed to Rev. A. W. McCLURE; and those belonging to the publishing department to WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & COMPANY, 22 School street, Boston.

PROPOSALS TO MINISTERS AND OTHERS.

We invite the attention of Pastors and others to the following proposals:

1. Any pastor or other person who will send us the names of four new subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER or THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, with the pay ($2,00 each), shall receive The Puritan Recorder or The Christian Observatory for one year.

2. Any pastor or other person who will send us a less number of names than four, for either or both of the above publications, with the money for the same, shall be credited 50 cents for each name, in payment for the publication which he may select.

3. Any person who will send us more than four names, and pay for the same, may retain 50 cents per name, as his commission.

We hope that these proposals will induce many to make a special effort, who have expressed a wish for these publications, but for want of pecuniary ability have not taken them. We hope also that many ministers, who are now subscribers to THE PURITAN RECORDER, will secure to themselves THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY by introducing it among their people.

WOODBRIDGE, MOORE & CO.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Acme
Bookbinding Co., Inc.
100 Cambridge St.
Charlestown, MA 02129

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google